NATION
Death toll in Amritsar hooch incident reaches 23
≫ Page: 4 ≪

BUSINESS
Food, fuel prices push WPI inflation down to 0.85%
≫ Page: 7 ≪

SPORTS
Alcaraz storms past Jack Draper to reach semis
≫ Page: 8 ≪

www.twitter.com/EnglishSalar
www.facebook.com/EnglishSalar
www.instagram.com/dailysalarenglish
youtube.com/@dailysalardigital

SALAR
DIGITAL ENGLISH DAILY, BENGALURU

روزنامہ ساحل بنگلور

Website: salarnews.in www.magzter.com 15 MAY 2025 | THURSDAY | BENGALURU | 16 DHU'L-QI'DAH, 1446 AH Vol 4 | Issue No 131 | Pages: 8

China renames Arunachal towns again

India calls Chinese attempt 'vain and preposterous'

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

India rejected China's move to rename some places in Arunachal Pradesh on Wednesday.

The Ministry of External Affairs dubbed China's attempt as "vain and preposterous" and said it will not alter the "undeniable" reality that the state "was, is, and will" always remain an integral part of India.

Beijing says Arunachal Pradesh, which its calls Zangnan, is a part of South Tibet - a claim New Delhi has repeatedly dismissed.

In April 2024, India fumed when Beijing released a list of standardised names of 30 places in Arunachal Pradesh.

The Chinese Civil Affairs Ministry released the first list of the standardised names of six places in Zangnan in 2017, while the second list of 15 places was issued in 2021 followed by another list with names for 11 places in 2023.

China's release of the new list of names of places in Arunachal Pradesh comes amid efforts by the two countries to normalise ties hit by the eastern Ladakh border standoff.

After a gap of nearly five years, India and China last month decided to resume the Kailash Mansarovar Yatra, a move that was seen as an attempt to repair the relationship.

The Kailash Mansarovar Yatra was suspended initially in 2020 because of the pandemic and subsequently because of the military standoff between the two sides along the Line of Actual Control (LAC) in Ladakh.

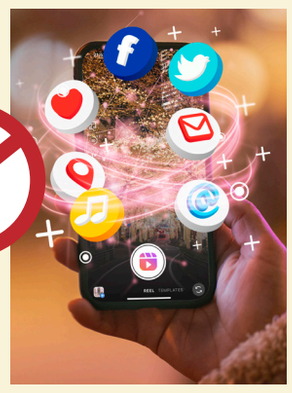
The militaries of India and China completed disengagement at the two remaining friction points of Demchok and Depsang under a pact sealed on 21 October last year.

This exchange comes days after India and Pakistan ended four days of intense military fighting, after Operation Sindoor —*PTI*

The militaries of India and China completed disengagement at the two remaining friction points of Demchok and Depsang under a pact sealed on 21 October last year **PHOTO: PTI**

INDIA BLOCKS CHINESE, TURKISH X HANDLES OVER MISINFO

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY



India has blocked several X (formerly Twitter) accounts affiliated with Chinese and Turkish state-run media, including Global Times, Xinhua, and TRT World, citing dissemination of misinformation against national interests. The move follows a strong rebuke from the Indian Embassy in Beijing over Global Times' coverage of the recent military operation, #OperationSindoor. The Embassy accused the outlet of spreading unverified, pro-Pakistan disinformation, calling it a serious lapse in journalistic ethics.

In parallel developments, Jawaharlal Nehru University (JNU) has suspended its academic MoU with Turkiye's Inonu University, signed in February, citing national security concerns. The partnership had included faculty and student exchange programs.

These actions come amid rising tensions following recent India-Pakistan military exchanges. Turkey's vocal support for Pakistan has further strained ties, prompting calls for a boycott of Turkish goods and tourism. —Agencies

>>>More on Pages 2, 3, 5 & 7

Anti-communal task force to extend to other K'taka dists

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

The Karnataka government is now planning to constitute anti-communal force in districts beyond the previously announced Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, Home Minister G Parameshwara said. The personnel will be from the police department and ANF. "I had asked the Director General of Police to send a proposal. We will examine it and approve at the government level," he added. The anti-communal task force was formed to investigate past communal riots and mitigate communal disturbances following the murder of Suhas Shetty in Mangaluru on 1 May. Parmashwara also said that the 'caste census' is likely to be discussed by the Cabinet separately after all ministers give their opinions. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Amazon, Flipkart get notices over sale of Pak flags

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

The Central Consumer Protection Authority (CCPA) has issued notices to several e-commerce companies, including Amazon India and Flipkart, over the sale of Pakistani flags and related merchandise, Consumer Affairs Minister Pralhad Joshi said on Wednesday. In its notices, also issued to Ubuy India, Etsy, The Flag Company, and The Flag Corporation, the regulatory body said the sale of Pakistani flags and merchandise would not be tolerated. Besides Amazon and Flipkart, Meesho, OLX, TradeIndia, Facebook, Indiamart, VardaanMart, Jiomart, Krishnamart, Chimiya, Talk Pro Walie Talkie and MaskMan toys were issued notices. —*PTI*

Karnataka man kills father, terms it accident

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

A man has killed his father in Karnataka's Tumakuru district, later claiming the death to have been caused due to an electric shock. Though the incident occurred on 11 May, police discovered the murder during investigations and while examining video footage from the crime scene. The footage showed the victim, Nagesh, 55, engaging in a heated argument with his son, Surya at the Apollo Ice Cream Factory on 11 May. Nagesh reportedly slapped Surya and then hit him with a slipper. He then tried to hit his son with a stick, with the latter dodging it. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

Pak sends jawan home after 21 days

AMRITSAR, 14 MAY

India and Pakistan on Wednesday handed each other's border-guarding personnel captured by the Border Security Force (BSF) and the Pakistan Rangers respectively at the international borders.

BSF jawan Purnam Kumar Shaw was handed over to India, 21 days after he was apprehended by the Rangers in Punjab on the day following the Pahalgam attack.

A Pakistan Ranger apprehended by BSF from the Rajasthan border on 3 May was also handed back to the neighbouring country.

Constable Shaw was handed over at 10.30am at the joint check post in Attari in Amritsar. He had "inadvertently" crossed over to the Pakistan territory while on operational duty in the Ferozepur sector on 23 April.

> **Because of him (Modi), my sindoor is safe, and my husband has come back**
>
> —Rajini Shaw, wife of BSF jawan Purnam Kumar Shaw

The jawan will undergo counselling and 'debriefing' where he will answer to "relevant questions" on his 21-day detention.

The jawan, belonging to the 24th BSF battalion, will not be drafted in active duty and will also be part of an official inquiry instituted by BSF's Punjab frontier to look into the sequence of his apprehension. —*PTI*

>>>More on Page 2

INDIA DESTROYS 20% OF PAK AIR FORCE INFRA

20% of Pakistan air force assets destroyed | 50 soldiers killed

Bases hit in Rawalpindi, Sindh, Punjab, Mushaf, Bholari, Thatta.

Satellite images show large craters on runways and damaged aircraft hangars.

Pak's JF-17 fighter destroyed.

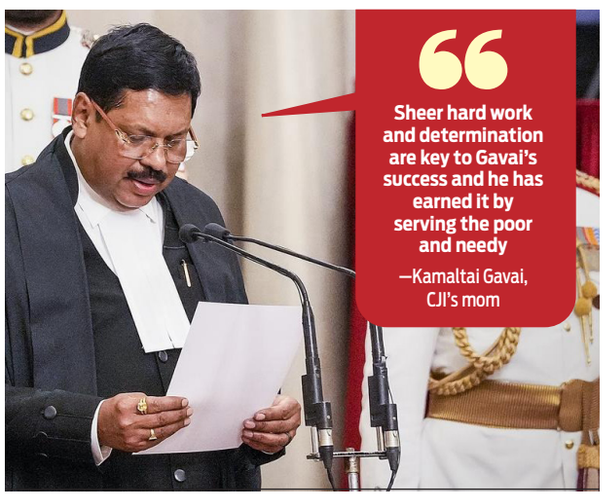
PAK MULLS RS 14 CR AID TO TERRORIST AZHAR

Pakistan found itself amidst a controversy after reports indicated that it may award Rs 14 crore in compensation to Masood Azhar, the UN-designated terrorist and leader of Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM). This statement was made following the death of 14 members of Azhar's family during "Operation Sindoor." Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif approved a compensation of Rs 1 crore to each individual killed.

Source: Govt

INDIA GETS ITS 52ND CJI

Justice BR Gavai took oath as the 52nd Chief Justice of India, succeeding Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who retired on 13 May. Gavai is the first Buddhist and second Dalit CJI, with a tenure until 23 November, 2025. Here are the key moments of his life...


Sheer hard work and determination are key to Gavai's success and he has earned it by serving the poor and needy
—Kamaltai Gavai, CJI's mom

24 Nov, 1960
Born in Amravati, Maharashtra. He is the son of Justice Ramkrishna Suryabhan Gavai, a former Bihar guv.

Early life & education
Attended Marathi-medium municipal school. Originally interested in politics, later shifted to law. Earned degrees in commerce and law from Amravati University.

16 March, 1985
Enrolled as advocate; began practising at Bombay High Court

12 Nov, 2005
Became Permanent Judge, Bombay High Court.

24 May, 2019
Elevated to the Supreme Court

2019-2025
Served on 700+ benches across varied domains of law. He upheld the abrogation of Article 370 and struck down electoral bonds scheme. Was part of a Constitution Bench which held that States have a right to sub-classify Scheduled Castes

>>>More on Pages 2, 4 & 5

Dead man carried in cloth for 1.5 km due to lack of ambulance in Yadgir

YADGIR, 14 MAY

A 33-year-old man, Mallappa, died on the spot after being hit by a tractor reportedly driven by a family member in Yadgir's Yaddalli village. To make matters worse, his brothers and fellow villagers were forced to carry his body nearly 1.5 km in a cloth due to the unavailability of an ambulance from the nearby Chattikuni Panchayat Health Centre.

A video of the incident has since gone viral, drawing widespread outrage and highlighting the dire state of emergency services in the area. Locals called the situation a "shameful moment for civil society". One village elder said, "This should never happen in any community."

PSI Hanamant Bankalgi of Yadgir Rural Police Station confirmed the incident occurred on 13 May. A case is yet to be registered. —*Salar News*

A video of the incident has since gone viral **PHOTO: SALAR**

If women can fly jets, why no posts in Army branch: SC

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

If a woman can fly Rafale fighter jet in the Indian Air Force, then why are fewer women officers in gender neutral posts of Judge Advocate General (legal) branch of the Army, the Supreme Court wondered recently and questioned the Centre's rationale on a 50-50 selection criterion.

A bench of Justices Dipankar Datta and Manmohan on 8 May reserved its verdict on the plea of two officers Arshnoor Kaur and Astha Tyagi, who despite securing 4th and 5th ranks respectively -- higher in merit than their male counterparts -- weren't selected for the JAG department due to fewer vacancies earmarked for women.

The officers challenged the disproportionate vacancies for men and women and said they could not be selected as there were only three vacancies for women out of the total six posts.

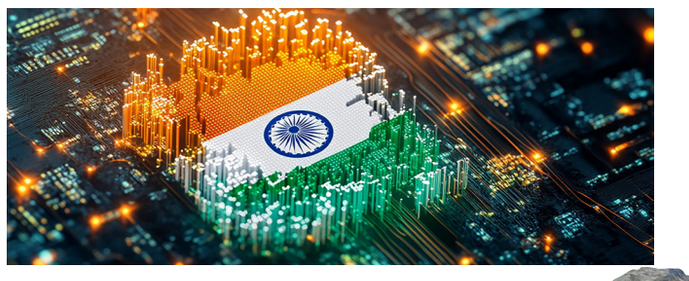
The bench referred to a newspaper article that a woman fighter pilot would be flying Rafale aircraft and said in such a scenario she could be taken as a prisoner of war.

The bench was informed that the second petitioner Tyagi joined the Indian Navy during the pendency of the proceedings. The top court then questioned the Centre for earmarking fewer posts for women despite claiming the posts to be gender neutral. It further asked why the posts were termed gender-neutral when women candidates with higher merit were not qualified owing to the vacancies still being bifurcated on gender. —*PTI*

HCL-FOXCONN JOINT VENTURE

Rs 3,706 cr semiconductor plant gets govt nod

BENGALURU, 14 MAY



The government on Wednesday approved an HCL-Foxconn semiconductor joint venture, which will set up a wafers manufacturing plant at an estimated cost of Rs 3,706 crore at Jewar in Uttar Pradesh.

The proposed HCL-Foxconn semiconductor plant will manufacture display driver chips for mobile phones, laptops, automobiles, and other devices, said I&B Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw while briefing the media on the decision taken by the Union Cabinet.

The unit will process 20,000 wafers per month and create about 2,000 jobs, a release said.

Meanwhile, India made its foray into developing advanced 3 nanometer (nm) chip, with Union Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw inaugurating two state-of-the-art semiconductor design centres of Japan's Renesas Electronics India Private in Noida and Bengaluru.

3 nm chip refers to silicone semiconductor chips that are advanced in terms of increased transistor density, speed and reduced power consumption.

The estimated cost of a 3nm chip design centre is around $15–$20 billion.

India has so far developed 5nm and 7nm chips.

"In a first, 3nm chips will be designed in India," the minister said on X.

The demand for semiconductors is bound to rise with its increasing use in different devices like laptops, smartphones, servers, medical devices, defence systems and vehicles.

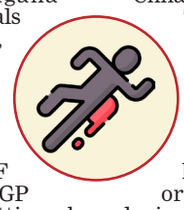
The minister also announced the launch of a new semiconductor learning kits for over 270 academic institutions that use advanced electronic design automation tools under the Indian semi-conductor mission.

Renesas CEO and managing director, Hidetoshi Shibata said that India and Japan's strategic partnership will play a vital role in reshaping the global semiconductor landscape. —*Salar News with Agencies*

31 Maoists killed in 21-day action in Ch'garh hills

BIJAPUR, 14 MAY

Central and State security forces have eliminated at least 31 Naxals in a 21-day-long comprehensive operation carried out in dense forests around Karregutta hills on the Chhattisgarh-Telangana border, security officials said Wednesday, asserting it is the "beginning of the end" of the Maoist menace.



Addressing a press conference, CRPF Director General GP Singh and Chhattisgarh Director General of Police (DGP) Arun Dev Gautam said during the 21-day operation that started on 21 April, the forces have recovered bodies of 31 Maoists, of which 28 have been identified.

"The eliminated Naxals identified so far carried a reward of Rs 1.72 crore on their heads. The forces have also seized a massive haul of weapons and destroyed four technical units of Naxals that used to manufacture weapons and IEDs," Vivekanand, Additional DG of Chhattisgarh Police, said.

The officials said that after analysing facts and information during the operation, it can be safely believed that many senior Maoist leaders have either been killed or seriously injured during the encounters. The security forces have not been able to recover all the bodies or arrest the injured because of extremely difficult terrain, the officials said.

The forces have recovered 35 weapons and a huge quantity of ammunition. —*PTI*

Car driver killed in collision with KSRTC bus

MYSURU, 14 MAY

A car driver was killed on the spot and several others injured in a head-on collision between a car and KSRTC bus at Manjanahalli in KR Nagar taluk on Wednesday. The incident took place when the car which was heading towards Hassan from Mysuru collided with a State bus travelling towards Mysuru from Chikkamagaluru. According to the police, the 34-year-old deceased Sunil was resident of Kanakadasanagar, Mysore. Another person in the car also sustained critical injuries while several bus passengers received minor injuries. The injured were admitted to a private hospital in Mysuru. KR Nagar Police have registered a case and investigation is underway—*Salar News*

Speaker Khader nominated for national panel

MANGALURU, 14 MAY

Karnataka Legislative Assembly Speaker UT Khader has been nominated to the National Committee of Presiding Officers, a panel constituted under the Tenth Schedule of the Constitution to deliberate on key reforms in the functioning of state legislatures. Lok Sabha Speaker Om Birla nominated Khader, who represents the Mangaluru (Ullal) constituency, to the committee, which comprises only four Assembly Speakers from across the country. The appointment is being seen as a significant recognition for Karnataka and the coastal constituency of Mangaluru. Khader told PTI that the committee is looking into reforms to improve discipline and uphold parliamentary decorum in state assemblies. "There are many reforms on the cards in the management and conduct of state assemblies in the country," he said. —*PTI*

More districts to have anti-communal task force

Moral policing to fall under the ambit of the task force

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

The Karnataka government is now planning to constitute anti-communal force in districts beyond the previously announced Dakshina Kannada and Udupi, Home Minister G Parameshwara said. The personnel will be from the police department and ANF.

He told the media on Wednesday that the government wants to end polarisation in the State.

"I asked the Director General of Police to send a proposal. We will examine it and approve," he added.

He said that communal moral policing, will also be entrusted to the anti-communal force. "If it (moral policing) is just a social problem, regular police will look into it. If it is communal in nature or ends up in communal issues, then we will definitely entrust it to anti-communal force."

Earlier this month, the Home Minister announced that the anti-communal force, on the lines of the Anti-Naxal Force (ANF), would be established to mitigate communal disturbances.

It was formed to investigate past communal riots, following the murder of Suhas Shetty in Mangaluru on 1 May. Shetty was the main accused in the 2022 mob lynching of Mohammed Fazil in Surathkal.

Parameshwara said ANF personnel with other police personnel, would be a part of the anti-communal force. —*PTI*

Cabinet to discuss caste census separately: HM

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

Home Minister G Parameshwara on Wednesday said that the Social and Educational Survey report, popularly known as 'caste census', is likely to be discussed by the Cabinet separately.

This will be done after all ministers give their written opinions.

Parameshwara said there was no lack of unity in the Cabinet.

"Eleven ministers are said to have given their opinion," he told reporters here.

Regarding the separate survey for gathering empirical data for internal reservation among Scheduled Castes(SCs), Parameshwara said some community leaders had informed him that there was not enough time for them to conduct a detailed survey.

"They said more time is needed; a minimum of 15 days to one month more time is required. I have asked them to give a representation to the Chief Minister and Justice HN Nagamohan Das commission. If they are convinced that more time is required, they may grant an extension," he said. —*PTI*

'PM'S NAME ON EVERY SCHEME'

CM slams Centre for withholding project funds

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

State Chief Minister Siddaramaiah on Wednesday slammed the Centre for "not releasing the announced grants" for the State, which include funds for the Bhadra dam project, pensions and the MGNREGS.

Siddaramaiah chaired a review meeting of the of District Development Coordination and Monitoring Committees (DISHA), which seeks to promote participative governance and deliberative democracy.

Siddaramaiah came down heavily on the Members of Parliament from Karnataka for "being silent".

"You should try to release the grants. You should shrug your responsibility," he said.

"The names of Prime Minister Modi and the Centre are on most of the projects funded by the State government. However, not even a fraction of the Centre's money is coming. Shouldn't you (MPs) question this continuous injustice?" he asked. —*PTI*

> **Even though we pay Rs 4.5 lakh crore in taxes, not even a small amount of aid comes to the State from the Centre. They do not give money even for centrally funded projects, but you accuse the State government of not having money for development**
>
> -Siddaramaiah, Chief Minister

INDIGENOUS TECH IS FUTURE, SAYS MP CM

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

Indigenous technology is the way forward for India, Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Mohan Yadav said on Wednesday during a visit to Bharat Earth Movers Limited (BEML) in City.

Yadav, who was at the facility to flag off BEML's 2,100th metro coach, also handed over a formal letter for the allocation of 60.063 hectares in Madhya Pradesh for establishment of a new BEML manufacturing unit.

Indigenous technology or Indigenous Technological Knowledge (ITK) refers to the traditional skills, innovations, and practices developed by native communities over generations.

Yadav noted that this was his second visit to City.

Shantanu Roy, Chairman and Managing Director of BEML, received the land allotment letter from Yadav for the establishment of a rolling stock manufacturing unit in the Umeria Raisen district of the state. —*PTI*

SMOOTH OPERATOR

The white topped BMTC bus stand service road at Majestic was inaugurated by Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao Bengaluru on Wednesday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

FUNDS ALLOCATED BY CENTRE VS AMOUNT RELEASED TO STATE

CM Siddaramaiah came down heavily on the Centre for not releasing funds to the State government in 2024-2025. This is what he claimed:

Centre sponsored schemes

ALLOCATED BY CENTRE: Rs 22,758 crore | AMOUNT GIVEN: Rs 18,561 crore

Funds for the lake and the peripheral ring road

ALLOCATED BY CENTRE: Rs 11,495 crore, including special grant of Rs 5,495 crore | AMOUNT GIVEN: State has not received anything

Widow, old age, and disabled pension schemes

ALLOCATED BY CENTRE: Rs 559.61 crore | AMOUNT GIVEN: Rs 113.92 crore

Bhadra Upper River Project schemes

ALLOCATED BY CENTRE: Rs 5,300 crore | AMOUNT GIVEN: Siddaramaiah claims 'not even a single rupee'

CAUGHT ON CAMERA

Tumakuru man kills father, stages it as electrocution

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

A man killed his father in Tumakuru district, and tried to pass the death off as an electrocution incident.

Though the incident occurred on 11 May, police discovered the murder during investigations and while examining video footage from the crime scene.

The footage showed the victim, Nagesh, 55, engaging in a heated argument with his son, Surya, at the Apollo Ice Cream Factory late at night on 11 May. Nagesh, the factory owner, reportedly slapped Surya and then hit him with a slipper. He tried to hit his son with a stick, but Surya dodged it.

As Nagesh turned around, Surya wrapped a white cloth, which he had been carrying all along, around his father's neck and strangled him.

Surya, with his friend, tried to stage it as a death due to electrocution by placing the body on a bed and applying electric shock to the fingers.

No one suspected the duo until Nagesh's sister, Savitha sensed something suspicious and filed a complaint.

Investigations and CCTV footage helped police to stitch together the missing pieces.

"The accused claimed his father sexually harassed his sister, which led him to plan the murder. There are also claims of a property dispute," police said —*Salar News*

The police uncovered CCTV footage which showed the murder unfold after a heated altercation **PHOTO: X**

Rains flood homes, road turn rivers in Hubballi

HUBBALLI, 14 MAY

Heavy rains in Hubballi city on Tuesday night flooded houses low-lying areas, sources said.

A Tempo Traveler carrying 13 passengers, along with two cars, was stuck in a flooded service road at the Rayanal underpass on the under-construction Hubballi-Dharwad bypass in outer Hubballi.

The heavy rain also flooded 30 houses in the Ganesh Nagar area. Residents said they face similar situation after every heavy rain but authorities ignore their complaints.

"The real issue lies with the open drains. They are filled with four to five feet of dirt and plastic waste, which blocks the water flow. There is stagnant water everywhere. We face the same problem every year. We even complained to the local MLA... They (drains) are not being cleaned. In my locality, almost every house was flooded because of this," said Prakash, a resident of Ganesh Nagar. —*ANI*

Hubballi residents said they face a similar situation annually **PHOTO: X**

Cops guard Col Sofiya's Belagavi house

BELAGAVI, 14 MAY

Following a post on X that Col Sofiya Qureshi's house in Konnuru village in Gokak taluk of Belagavi district was damaged by RSS and Hindu activists, police have deployed personnel to guard the place.

Belagavi Superintendent of Police Bhimashankar Guled said on Wednesday that a person by the name Anis Hudeen, who made the post from Canada, took it down after Belagavi cyber crime cell replied that it was false information and informed X platform.

"We will take stringent action on him if he is from India," Guled said and warned the public against sharing such posts. Col Sofiya's husband, also a colonel serving in Janshi, hails from Konnuru. Her father-in-law Gous Bagewadi and family reside in the house in Konnuru village. Colonel Qureshi was a key figure in the armed forces during media briefings on Operation Sindoor, alongside Wing Commander Vyomika Singh. —*Salar News*

GOVT TAKES OVER 108-AMBULANCE FROM PVT AGENCY

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

The State government will completely take over the management of 108-ambulance services from a private agency owing to "mismanagement", Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao announced on Wednesday.

"These 108-ambulances were being managed by a private agency until now, and there were many problems with the system," he said.

"We have decided to move away from private management," he told reporters. "The command control will be with us."

Highlighting the importance of the 108 ambulance service, Rao said, "Its management was not being done properly by the private agency. Although the government paid the agency, the salaries of ambulance staff were not being paid on time." He added, "The government had to intervene multiple times to resolve the issues faced by ambulance drivers." —*PTI*

'DANGER TO PUBLIC SAFETY'

HC calls for tougher laws to curb wheeling

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

The Karnataka High Court raised serious concerns over the lack of specific legal provisions to deal with the growing menace of 'wheeling' and called for tougher laws to curb it.

Wheeling is a stunt where two-wheeler riders lift the front wheel while driving.

Justice V Srishananda, while hearing a bail plea, observed that current laws fall short of effectively deterring such behaviour.

Currently, individuals performing wheeling can only be charged under provisions related to negligent or rash driving, which are bailable offences. The fines for wheeling can range between 1,000 to 25,000.

Justice Srishananda noted that these provisions are inadequate for law enforcement to take stringent action. "(When) enacting the Motor Vehicles Act, perhaps the lawmakers did not envisage a situation where a two-wheeler would be driven on the rear wheel alone." The Court highlighted that wheeling not only endangers the lives of riders and pillion passengers but also poses a grave threat to public safety.

"Young motorcyclists wrongly equate wheeling with bravery," the court noted.

The Court rejected a bail application of a man accused of performing wheeling on a motorcycle with two pillion riders in October 2024.

According to the police, the stunt ended in a crash when officers attempted to intercept the vehicle.

A confrontation followed, during which the accused abused the officers. While the accused maintained that he was falsely implicated due to a personal dispute with the police, the High Court was not convinced. —*PTI*

KPCC lauds ex-CJI for refusing all official posts

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

The Karnataka Pradesh Congress Committee (KPCC) lauded outgoing Chief Justice of India (CJI) Sanjiv Khanna's decision to decline any position or appointment post retirement from the Supreme Court.

"This selfless choice underscores your unwavering commitment to upholding the integrity, impartiality, and independence of the judiciary, setting a remarkable precedent for future generations of judges," In a letter to the CJI, Chairman of the KPCC Media Department Ramesh Babu wrote. "By choosing not to accept any post-retirement positions, you have demonstrated a resolute dedication to the principles of justice, fairness, and equality."

On 13 May, the CJI met journalists in the apex court premises and said, "I will not accept any post-retirement post ... .perhaps will do something with law."

Many former apex court judges begin their innings in arbitration post judgeship. "I will have a third innings and will do something related to law," the CJI had said. —*Salar News*

Got involved to convince India, Pakistan to make peace: Trump

This is the fifth time the US Prez is claiming that he brokered the ceasefire

NEW YORK, 14 MAY

US President Donald Trump has repeated his claim that Washington "got involved" with India and Pakistan, saying he "didn't like what was happening" and that he did a "good job" in convincing the two countries to make peace.

Trump was speaking to Fox News aboard Air Force One after he wrapped up his Saudi Arabia visit on Tuesday. This is the fifth time since Saturday that Trump has claimed that the US brokered the "ceasefire" between New Delhi and Islamabad on Saturday.

Trump told Fox News' Sean Hannity, "I didn't like what was happening. And you know, they're two very strongly nuclear countries, with very, very powerful amounts of nuclear, too serious stuff. And if that ever started, boy, that's the beginning of something that could be really bad... And I just thought it was something we could get involved in," he said.

"And I did a good job. (Secretary of State) Marco (Rubio) did a good job and (Vice President) JD (Vance) did a good job. And we, I think, convinced them to let's have peace and let's go and make trade deals."

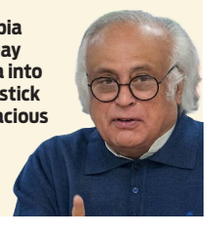
Meanwhile, UK's Foreign Secretary David Lammy told the British Parliament that the country was ready to work with India and Pakistan to ensure a lasting ceasefire and will lean in to support efforts on both sides to deal with "horrendous terrorism".

"Let me be clear that the horrendous terrorism we saw – 26 nationals stripped and shot – was horrific, and we condemn it. We will continue to work with close partners to deal with this terrorist threat... all of us have to lean in and ensure that we are supporting efforts on both sides to deal with horrendous terrorism. That is what, in the end, will maintain an enduring peace," he said.

Stephane Dujarric, a spokesperson for UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres said, "The ceasefire is holding. I think we have seen we're in a better place than we were before. We hope that the ceasefire will continue to hold, and we hope that the parties will use this to deal with a lot of the outstanding issues between them." —*PTI*

Trump was speaking to Fox News aboard Air Force One after he wrapped up his Saudi Arabia visit on Tuesday **PHOTO: PTI**

> **Now, at a public event in Saudi Arabia yesterday, Trump reveals that he may have coerced and blackmailed India into this ceasefire using the carrot-and-stick of sanctions and trade deals. What do the loquacious PM and EAM have to say? Ameriki papa ne war rukwa di kya?**
>
> —Jairam Ramesh, Congress General Secretary



Ambani flies to Qatar to meet Trump

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Richest Asian **Mukesh Ambani** is flying to Doha to meet US President Donald Trump, his second meeting since Trump returned to presidency in January this year.

Ambani will attend a state dinner that the Emir of Qatar is hosting for Trump at the Lusail Palace in Doha on Wednesday.

Reliance Industries Ltd, the firm that Ambani heads, did not reply to an email sent for comments.

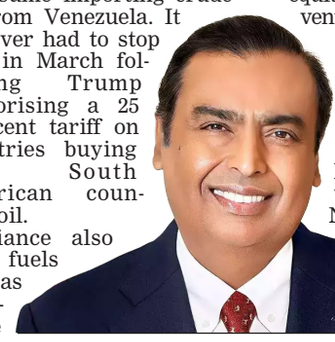
Reliance had last year secured waivers from the US to resume importing crude oil from Venezuela. It however had to stop that in March following Trump authorising a 25 per cent tariff on countries buying the South American country's oil.

Reliance also sells fuels such as gasoline made from crude oil bought from countries Russia into the American market.

Also, Google and Meta have equity stake in Ambani's digital venture.

Reliance has business ties with Qatar as well. The Gulf nation's sovereign wealth fund, Qatar Investment Authority (QIA) has invested about USD 1 billion in Ambani's retail venture. Ambani and his wife Nita had attended Trump's second inauguration in January. —*PTI*

- Reliance had last year secured waivers from the US to resume importing crude oil from Venezuela. It however had to stop that in March following Trump authorising a 25 per cent tariff on countries buying the South American country's oil.



Jawan cries 'inside job', PIB calls it fake

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

An FIR was registered on Wednesday against a missing soldier after a video appeared on social media in which he had claimed that the Pahalgam terror attack was an "inside job".

However, The Press Information Bureau (PIB) Fact Check unit debunked the viral video.

The soldier, Dlhair Mushtaq Sofi, is a sepoy of 29 Rashtriya Rifles and a resident of the Tral area of Jammu and Kashmir's Pulwama district, according to police. "The missing report... was lodged on 11.03. 2025. (It) has been converted into an FIR after a video showing him surfaced on social media," a police official said.

In the video, Sofi claims that he is aware of "each and everything and how fake encounters are being done."

"Indian government, RAW, IB and Army were involved in the Pahalgam attack. I wanted to stay silent, but my conscience does not allow me to remain silent anymore," says the soldier in the video.

The soldier also mentions that his parents had committed a mistake by making him join the armed forces.

The police official said the video, verified by Sofi's father and uncle, prompted the registration of FIR No. 75/2025 under Sections 197(d), 152 BNS at Police Station Ganderbal. PIB said the video was fake and that the Army officer had not reported for duty since March 2025, and neither was he in contact with his relatives. "Please stay alert. Do not fall for any such videos," he said.

Meanwhile, the account that spread the video of the missing army soldier has been withheld in India "in response to a legal demand". —*PTI*

On 13 May, India tested Bhargavastra, a new low-cost indigenous counter-drone system, in Gopalpur, Odisha. It can destroy drone swarms and works above 5,000m **PHOTO: ANI**

> **Indian government, RAW, IB and Army were involved in the Pahalgam attack. I wanted to stay silent, but my conscience does not allow me to remain silent anymore**
>
> —Dlhair Mushtaq Sofi, Soldier

LACK OF SAFE HAVENS

Omar pushes for private bunkers in border areas

SRINAGAR, 14 MAY

Jammu and Kashmir Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Wednesday assured every possible help to rebuild homes of people affected by Pakistani shelling near the Line of Control, and said "the pain of my people is deeply personal".

Abdullah, who visited the shelling affected areas of Uri, including Salamabad, Lagama, Bandi and Gingal in north Kashmir's Baramulla district, also said that he would take up the demand for building individual bunkers in these areas with the Centre.

"It is our responsibility to provide you help from the government so that your houses are rebuilt," Abdullah, who was accompanied by his advisor Nasir Aslam Wani, said.

The CM said the people of Uri have endured pain several times but have risen every time with courage and resilience.

Meanwhile, Major General Atul Kaushik (Retd) said on Wednesday highlighted the need to build more bunkers for the people living in border areas.

He said that towns such as Uri, Tangdhar and Poonch were severely affected in the recent cross-border shelling.

"The recent civilian casualties highlight a critical issue - the lack of sufficient bunkers and safe havens for the local population. The destruction of property and livestock during these conflicts is rarely compensated adequately, leaving families in dire situations," Kaushik said. —*PTI*

J&K Chief Minister Omar Abdullah during a visit to the areas affected due to recent attacks from Pakistan, in Uri, Baramulla district, J&K **PHOTO: PTI**

Security tightened along Rajasthan border

LAHORE, 14 MAY

Amid concerns of espionage, the Rajasthan administration has intensified security measures along the India-Pakistan border, with authorities in Jaisalmer and Sri Ganganagar banning the use of Pakistani SIM cards.

According to officials, Pakistan has recently increased the range of mobile towers near the border, prompting fears of unauthorised communication and surveillance.

Jaipur's Sawai Mansingh (SMS) Stadium once again received a bomb threat on Wednesday. On the contrary, schools in five Punjab districts bordering Pakistan reopened on Wednesday, six days after they were closed in view of the military standoff between India and Pakistan, officials said. While schools in Gurdaspur reopened on Tuesday, those in the other five border districts followed suit on Wednesday. —Agencie

FIR against MP Min for remarks on Sofia

JABALPUR, 14 MAY

The Jabalpur High Court on Wednesday ordered the registration of an FIR against Madhya Pradesh minister Vijay Shah who has attracted all-round flak for his purported controversial remarks targetting Colonel Sofiya Qureshi.

Shah, the Tribal Affairs Minister and BJP leader, sparked a major controversy by trying to project Colonel Qureshi as a "sister of terrorists".

Colonel Qureshi had conducted regular press briefings along with Foreign Secretary Vikram Misri and Wing Commander Vyomika Singh, sharing details of the Operation Sindoor.

Taking suo motu cognisance of the controversial statement, the high court's division bench of Justices Atul Shridharan and Anuradha Shukla issued the order to register an FIR against the minister.

The National Commission for Women chairperson Vijaya Rahatkar posted on X, "It is extremely unfortunate that derogatory and unacceptable statements are being made towards women by some responsible persons...Dear Colonel Sofiya Qureshi is a proud daughter of this nation, a sister of all country-loving Indians, who has served the country with courage and dedication."

Meanwhile, Congress on Wednesday staged protests in Indore against Shah. —*PTI*

Sofia Qureshi **PHOTO: PTI**

Chiefs of Tri-Services brief the President

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, alongside the heads of Army, Navy, and Air Force, briefed President Droupadi Murmu on Operation Sindoor at Rashtrapati Bhavan. The briefing was attended by Army Chief General Upendra Dwivedi, Air Chief Marshal AP Singh, and Naval Chief Admiral Dinesh K Tripathi. The President praised the courage and commitment of the armed forces, describing India's response to terrorism as a remarkable success. On Wednesday, Prime Minister Narendra Modi chaired high-level meeting of Cabinet Committee on Security and Union Cabinet meeting in New Delhi. —*PTI*

Chief of Defence Staff General Anil Chauhan, alongside the heads of the Army, Navy, and Air Force briefing President Droupadi Murmu to brief her about Operation Sindoor, in New Delhi **PHOTO: PTI**

INDIA-PAKISTAN TENSION

Centre adds bullet-resistant vehicles to EAM's security

New Delhi, 14 May

The security cover of External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar has been strengthened with the addition of two bullet-resistant vehicles following a review of his Z category armed central protection, official sources said on Wednesday. Jaishankar has been speaking to various world leaders and Foreign Ministers about Operation Sindoor. The sources told PTI that a recent review of Jaishankar's armed security was undertaken by Central intelligence agencies recommendation. —*PTI*

TV star Akhil Marar faces anti-national charges

KOLLAM, 14 MAY

Kerala Police have booked Malayalam TV personality and social media influencer Akhil Marar under Section 152 of the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita, a non-bailable offence concerning acts endangering India's sovereignty and unity. The complaint, filed by BJP leader Anish Kizhakkekkara, alleges Marar made anti-national remarks in a now-deleted video. In Uttar Pradesh, police arrested Kurban Tyagi for posting objectionable content against the country on Facebook—he is the fourth person held for similar offences. —*PTI*

Security tightened at Odisha's port after arrival of Pak ship

PARADIP, 14 MAY

Odisha Police increased security at Paradip port after the arrival of the MT Siren II, a ship carrying crude oil with 21 Pakistani crew members aboard. The vessel, en route from South Korea via Singapore, is anchored 20km from shore. No crew are permitted to leave during oil evacuation. —*PTI*

'Honey-trapped' Pak High Commissioner still untraceable

BENGALURU, 14 MAY

Pakistan's High Commissioner to Bangladesh Syed Ahmed Maroof has availed leave after a viral video showed him in a compromising position with a Bangladeshi woman. Maroof was untraceable after his "honey-trap" videos surfaced. Photographs of the couple suggested a relationship between them. Speculations were rife with some suggesting that he fled to another country. —*Salar News*

BSF JAWAN RETURNS

Immense relief for us: Family thanks Centre

RISHRA, 14 MAY

The family members of BSF constable Purnam Kumar Shaw expressed immense relief and gratitude to the Central government and BSF authorities for securing his return. Shaw who was released by Pakistan from its custody on Wednesday,

The constable, who hails from Rishra in West Bengal's Hooghly district, was handed over to the BSF by Pakistan Rangers at 10.30am via the Attari-Wagah border front in Punjab. Shaw was apprehended by the Rangers on 23 April from the India-Pakistan international border in Ferozepur district, a day after the Pahalgam terror attack.

The jawan belongs to the 24th BSF battalion.

"We are very happy today. We thank the central government and the BSF authorities for their efforts in safely bringing him back. The past two weeks have been filled with sleepless nights and uncertainty for us. We were constantly worried about his well-being," a family member of Shaw told reporters.

"We are now eagerly waiting to speak to him and see him in person. Our prayers have finally been answered," he said.

A BSF spokesperson said the handover was conducted peacefully and in accordance with established protocols.

Shaw had "inadvertently" crossed over to Pakistan territory while on operational duty in the area of Ferozepur sector on 23 April and detained by Pak Rangers, he said.

Officials told PTI that the jawan will undergo a full body check-up and medical test followed by a counselling and 'debriefing' session where he will be asked "relevant questions" by BSF officials about his 21-day detention. —*PTI*

The constable, who hails from Rishra in West Bengal's Hooghly district, was handed over to the BSF by Pakistan Rangers at 10.30am via the Attari-Wagah border front in Punjab **PHOTO: PTI**

> **I had all along been in touch with his family and spoke thrice with his. Today also I called her. All the very best wishes for my brother-like jawan**
>
> —Mamata Banerjee, West Bengal CM

Chopper service at Vaishno Devi shrine resumes

JAMMU, 14 MAY

The helicopter service to the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine in Jammu and Kashmir's Reasi district resumed on Wednesday after being suspended for a week due to the military standoff between India and Pakistan, officials said. This came a day after flight operations recommenced at 32 airports, including Jammu and Srinagar. "The helicopter service at the Mata Vaishno Devi shrine resumed this morning after remaining suspended for the past seven days," an official of the shrine board said, adding that pilgrim footfall has also started picking up after witnessing a sharp decline since the beginning of this month. The battery car service for the pilgrims is also functional, the official said. *—PTI*

'Gopniya sainik' shoots himself dead in Sukma

SUKMA, 14 MAY

A "gopniya sainik" allegedly died by suicide at a police camp in Chhattisgarh's Naxal-affected Sukma district on Wednesday. "Gopniya sainik" or secret troopers are recruited by the police for intelligence gathering and to assist them in anti-Naxal operations in Bastar region. The incident took place around 9.30am in Bhandaripara police camp where the deceased, identified as Sodhi Somda, was posted. As per the preliminary information, he took the service rifle of a policeman and shot himself. He was rushed to the district hospital in Sukma where doctors declared him dead. The reason for the extreme step was yet to be ascertained. Investigation was underway. *—PTI*

DU college asks students, staff to follow VC on X

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Delhi University's Shaheed Bhagat Singh College has asked its students and staff members to follow the official X account of Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh and actively share his posts expressing solidarity with the Indian armed forces. In an official notice dated 12 May and signed by Principal Arun Kumar Attree, the college administration said, "All teachers, staff members, and students of the college are hereby requested to follow the Vice Chancellor Yogesh Singh's official X account." The college community is "encouraged to retweet the posts shared through the platform" as a gesture of support and gratitude towards the country's defence forces. Singh created his X account and made his first post on 8 May. *—PTI*

PHOTO: ANI

Forces arrest 12 militants, 2 arms dealers in Manipur

IMPHAL, 14 MAY

Security forces have arrested 12 militants belonging to proscribed outfits and two arms dealers from Manipur. Four cadres of the banned People's Liberation Army, two members of Kangleipak Communist Party and one of Kanglei Yawol Kanna Lup were apprehended near Yongkhul village in Tengnoupal district. Besides, two members of the outlawed KCP (PWG) were arrested from Lilong Nungei and Wangbal in Thoubal, and two cadres of PREPAK from Koirengei Kabui Khul Gate in Imphal East. Another active cadre of the proscribed United National Liberation Front (Pambei group) was held from Puhkhao Ahallup Makha Leikai in Imphal East. The security personnel also nabbed two more arms dealers on 13 May *—PTI*

Justice Gavai sworn in as 52nd Chief Justice of India

Administered oath by Prez Murmu, Gavai will retire in Nov

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

President Droupadi Murmu administers the oath of office to Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai as the 52nd Chief Justice of India at Rashtrapati Bhavan in New Delhi on Wednesday *PHOTO: PTI*

Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai was on Wednesday sworn in as the 52nd Chief Justice of India.

Gavai, 64, was administered the oath in Hindi by President Droupadi Murmu at a brief ceremony at the Ganatantra Mandap in Rashtrapati Bhavan. He succeeds Justice Sanjiv Khanna, who demitted office on 13 May.

Justice Gavai, who was elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court in May 2019, will have a tenure of over six months and retire on 23 November.

Gavai sought his mother Kamal Tai Gavai's blessings. Vice President Jagdeep Dhankhar, Prime Minister Narendra Modi, Union ministers and former judges greeted him.

Union ministers Rajnath Singh, Amit Shah, J P Nadda and Arjun Ram Meghwal and former president Ram Nath Kovind were also present.

Born on November 24, 1960 at Amravati, Justice Gavai was elevated as an additional judge of the Bombay High Court in November 2003, becoming permanent in November, 2005.

He has been a part of several Constitution benches in the apex court which delivered path-breaking verdicts like upholding the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 bestowing special status to Jammu and Kashmir, annulling the electoral bonds scheme for political funding and approving the Centre's decision to demonetize currency notes of certain denomination

Another bench with Gavai held that states are constitutionally empowered to make sub-classifications within Scheduled Castes for granting reservation to backward castes.

He also heads the bench hearing matters related to forests, wildlife and protection of trees.

He had joined the bar in March, 1985 and was the standing counsel for the municipal corporations of Nagpur and Amravati and Amravati University.

He served as an assistant government pleader and additional public prosecutor as well as government pleader and public prosecutor in the Bombay High Court's Nagpur bench. *—PTI*

PROBE ORDERED

SC recalls ruling in land row amid 'ghost' respondent scam

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

The Supreme Court has withdrawn its ruling in a land dispute after it found that the favourable verdict was obtained through a fabricated settlement and a "ghost" respondent.

A bench asked the apex court registry to conduct an inquiry and file a report within three weeks, also warning of an FIR against the guilty.

The bench on December 13, 2024 quashed the orders of a Muzaffarpur trial court and the Patna High Court based on a purported compromise between the petitioner and the respondent, who turned out to be an imposter.

The real respondent, Harish Jaiswal from Bihar's Muzaffarpur, never compromised with petitioner Bipin Bihari Sinha nor appointed any lawyer to appear on his behalf in the matter.

Sinha along with a few unnamed individuals fabricated a compromise and engaged lawyers without Jaiswal's knowledge or consent. *—PTI*

SC refuses listing of plea for FIR against Justice Varma

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

The Supreme Court on Wednesday refused to list for urgent hearing a plea seeking registration of an FIR against the Allahabad High Court's Justice Yashwant Varma in the cash discovery row.

Yashwant Varma *PHOTO: PTI*

A bench comprising Chief Justice BR Gavai and Justice Augustine George Masih asked lawyer and petitioner Mathews Nedumpara and three others to follow the mentioning procedure.

Former CJI Sanjiv Khanna had said no to oral mentioning for urgent listing and hearing of cases. Lawyers or the litigants will have to write an email and move the apex court registry first.

After an in-house inquiry panel indicted the judge, Khanna had nudged Justice Varma to resign. He wrote to President Droupadi Murmu and Prime Minister Narendra Modi after Justice Varma refused to resign.

The petition called for immediate initiation of criminal proceedings, saying the in-house committee found the allegations against Justice Varma to be prima facie true. *—PTI*

Death toll in Amritsar hooch incident reaches 23

AMRITSAR, 14 MAY

Punjab Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann meets the families of victims who died after consuming spurious liquor in Amritsar *PHOTO: PTI*

The death toll in the hooch tragedy in Amritsar's Majitha area has risen to 23, with two more victims from Bhangwan village dying after consuming spurious liquor. Most of the deceased were daily wage workers from villages including Bhangali, Patalpuri, Marari Kalan, Talwandi Khumman, Karnala, Bhangwan, and Therewal.

The victims reportedly ingested liquor contaminated with methanol, a toxic industrial chemical, which had been purchased online in bulk. Methanol is often added to illicit alcohol as a cheaper alternative to ethanol.

The Punjab Police have arrested 10 people, including the suspected ringleader, and filed cases of murder and culpable homicide. Two officers from the Excise Department have been suspended for negligence.

In the aftermath, Chief Minister Bhagwant Mann announced a compensation of Rs 10 lakh for each deceased victim's family and pledged to cover the educational expenses of the victims' children.

Families of the victims are struggling with the loss. Manjit Kaur, who lost her brother, expressed the difficulty in coping with the tragedy.

Meanwhile, the police continue to investigate, with two separate FIRs registered under relevant provisions of the Indian Penal Code and the Excise Act. *—PTI*

Goa stampede was preventable, says report

PANAJI, 14 MAY

A fact-finding committee appointed by the Goa government has concluded that the 3 May stampede at Sri Lairai Devi temple in Shirgao, North Goa, was entirely preventable.

Six people died, and around 100 were injured during the stampede, which occurred during the annual temple festival.

The report identified a combination of factors like overcrowding, poor planning, lack of crowd control and ignored safety directives leading to the tragedy. The immediate cause was overcrowding on a sloping pathway, particularly near the local bank, which caused instability when devotees or dhonds, pushed forward in an unruly manner. The stampede began when a woman fell, triggering a chain reaction as others lost their balance and fell on top of one another. *—PTI*

5 BOYS DROWN IN POND IN ANDHRA

VIJAYAWADA, 14 MAY

Five boys tragically drowned in a pond in Mallepally village, Kadapa district, on Tuesday afternoon. The boys, aged between 10 and 15, were all relatives and had gone to play in the pond around 3pm. Mydukuru sub-divisional police officer Rajendra Prasad said the pond is shallow up to 200m from the banks. However, beyond that, the depth increases to 12 to 13 feet, and the boys struggled to swim when they ventured into the deeper area.

As time passed, the boys' family members began searching for them. They discovered their clothes near the pond but no sign of the children. After searching in the water, the bodies of the boys were recovered around 11pm. *—PTI*

Woman who quit job for childcare granted alimony

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

- Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, in her order, stated that the woman's decision could be viewed as a consequence of her primary responsibility to care for the child

The Delhi High Court ruled on 13 May that a woman who left her job to care for her child as a single parent was not voluntarily deserting work, and was entitled to alimony.

Justice Swarana Kanta Sharma, in her order, stated that the woman's decision could be viewed as a consequence of her primary responsibility to care for the child.

The husband had challenged a trial court's October 2023 order, which required him to pay Rs 7,500 per month to his estranged wife and the same amount for their child. However, the High Court upheld the order, directing the man to continue paying Rs 7,500 to the wife and Rs 4,500 towards child support.

The court noted that care-giving responsibilities often limit a parent's ability to work full-time, especially without family support. The husband argued that the woman, being highly educated and previously employed, was capable of supporting herself. However, the woman explained that she had to leave her teaching job due to long commutes and a lack of nearby work.

The court accepted her reasoning, finding it reasonable and justified, and directed the family court to re-evaluate the interim maintenance plea with the husband's income details. *—PTI*

Kerala police launch probe as Jehovah's Witnesses get threat

KOCHI, 14 MAY

The threat comes as the trial is set to begin in the 2023 blasts during a Jehovah's Witnesses gathering in Kalamassery *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

- The caller, phoning from a Malaysian number at 9.57pm on 12 May, allegedly warned that members of the religious group who testify against the accused in the Kalamassery serial blasts case would be killed

Kerala Police have launched an investigation after the Public Relations Officer (PRO) of Jehovah's Witnesses reported receiving a threatening international call. The caller, phoning from a Malaysian number at 9.57pm on 12 May, allegedly warned that members of the religious group who testify against the accused in the Kalamassery serial blasts case would be killed.

The caller also threatened to plant bombs at all venues where the PRO conducts religious meetings and services, according to a complaint filed at Kalamassery police station. Authorities have confirmed that a First Information Report (FIR) has been registered and the matter is under active investigation.

The threat comes just as the trial is set to begin over the October 2023 blasts during a Jehovah's Witnesses gathering in Kalamassery, which claimed eight lives and injured several others.

Dominic Martin, believed to be an estranged member of the group, surrendered hours after the blasts in Thrissur district and claimed responsibility. He was arrested and remains in custody. Police are likely to seek international assistance in tracing the call's origin. *—PTI*

Kerala rly caterer found serving expired food

KOCHI, 14 MAY

Stale and expired food was found at a catering unit here, which allegedly supplies food to the Indian Railways, a state health department official said on Wednesday.

The catering unit, named Brandavan, was also found to be disposing food and other waste into a nearby canal in violation of the rules, the official told reporters here.

Expired food was also stored at a nearby godown where the staff of the catering unit was staying, the official added.

He said that he got information regarding the unit on the previous night and based on that carried out an inspection on Wednesday morning.

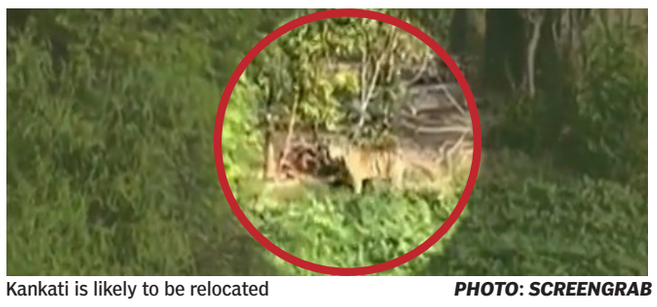
The official said that since the unit was functioning without a corporation licence and in violation of the rules, it will be shut down and sealed.

The municipal councillor of the area told reporters that several warnings were given to the unit. *—PTI*

KILLED TWO PEOPLE

Ranthambore's 'man-eater' may be shifted

JAIPUR, 14 MAY



Kankati is likely to be relocated *PHOTO: SCREENGRAB*

A tigress suspected to be involved in two fatal attacks in the Ranthambore Tiger Reserve was tranquillised on Wednesday.

Alarmed after the tigress named Kankati moved towards a hotel in the periphery of the forest area, the forest authorities decided to tranquillise her. She will be kept in an enclosure until her relocation is finalised.

On 11 May, ranger Devendra Chaudhary was fatally attacked while on duty in the Jogi Mahal area of Ranthambore National Park. On 16 April, a seven-year-old boy was killed in a similar manner near the Trinetra Ganesh temple within the reserve.

Kankati, the daughter of tigress Arrowhead was suspected to have been involved in both attacks. As Arrowhead was unable to hunt, the forest authorities started giving bait to her and her cubs, including Kankati, near the Jogi Mahal area. This may have caused her natural wariness of humans, officials said. *—PTI*

UP zoos, lion safari shut amid bird flu scare

LUCKNOW, 14 MAY

All zoos in Uttar Pradesh and the lion safari in State's Etawah district have been closed to visitors for a week after bird flu was detected in a tigress that died at a zoo in Gorakhpur, officials said on Wednesday.

While authorities have directed enhanced surveillance across zoos and poultry farms, a team formed by Central Zoo Authority will investigate the impact of avian influenza at the Gorakhpur zoo and submit its report in 15 days, they said.

The zoo shutdown – effective from 14 to 20 May – was ordered in line with directives issued during a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath on Tuesday.

Principal Chief Forest Conservator Anuradha Vemuri said that in light of the confirmed presence of bird flu case at Shaheed Ashfaq Ullah Khan Zoological Park, the Wildlife Department has swiftly closed all zoos in Lucknow, Gorakhpur, Kanpur and the Lion Safari in Etawah to tourists.

Health safety measures for wild animals are being rigorously followed to contain the spread of the disease, the official said. *—PTI*

HAJJ PILGRIMAGE

Hajj pilgrims leave for the airport from Hajj House at Bemina, in Srinagar, on Wednesday. Hajj flights resumed from Srinagar a day after the airport was reopened following a temporary shutdown due to the recent conflict between India and Pakistan. Hajj is an annual Islamic journey to the holiest city for Muslims in Mecca, Saudi Arabia ***PHOTO: PTI***

Europe closes ranks with Zelenskyy once again

It was a weekend of diplomatic announcements on the war in Ukraine.

First, European leaders assembled in Kyiv on Saturday with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy to put pressure on Russian President Vladimir Putin for a ceasefire. Then, after midnight, the Kremlin leader surfaced in Moscow to unveil a proposal for talks in Istanbul, Turkey.

If both Putin and Zelenskyy sit down with each other, it would be a first in the three-year-old war.

Key events that have shaped efforts to end the war since Russia invaded Ukraine on 24 February, 2022:

28 February, 2022: Ukrainian and Russian delegations meet in neighbouring Belarus for the first time after the invasion. Talks continue over the next two weeks.

21 March, 2022: Zelenskyy calls for direct talks with Putin but is rebuffed by Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov. A day later, Zelenskyy says he is prepared to discuss a commitment for Ukraine to not to seek NATO membership in exchange for a ceasefire.

29 March, 2022: Talks begin in Istanbul, Turkey, with Moscow saying it's willing to "fundamentally cut back" military activity near Kyiv and the northern city of Chernihiv.

7 April, 2022: Lavrov rejects a Ukrainian peace proposal as "unacceptable." He says Kyiv has walked back on an agreement to exempt the Crimean Peninsula from wider Ukrainian security guarantees.

26 April, 2022: UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres visits Russia to discuss ending the war.

13 May, 2022: US Defence Secretary Lloyd Austin calls his Russian counterpart, Sergei Shoigu.

22 July, 2022: Russia and Ukraine, agree on a deal to unblock supplies of grain stuck in Ukraine's Black Sea ports, ending a standoff that threatened global food security.

European leaders assembled in Kyiv on Saturday with President Volodymyr Zelenskyy ***PHOTO: PTI***

22 September, 2022: Zelenskyy addresses the UN General Assembly, laying out five "nonnegotiable" conditions, including a "just punishment" for Russia.

30 September, 2022: Russia illegally annexes the Ukrainian regions of Donetsk, Luhansk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson, even though it doesn't fully control any of them. Ukraine responds by applying to join NATO and by enacting a decree that declares negotiations with Putin "impossible".

25 June, 2023: Officials from 15 countries meet in Copenhagen, Denmark, to discuss Zelenskyy's peace plan.

5 August, 2023: Two days of discussions on the war begin in Saudi Arabia with delegates from 40 countries, but not Russia.

28 October, 2023: Delegates from 65 countries meet in Malta to continue talks on Zelenskyy's peace plan. Russia was not invited.

15 June, 2024: Representatives of 92 nations meet in Nidwalden, Switzerland, to discuss Ukraine's peace plan.

7 December, 2024: US President-elect Donald Trump travels to Paris and meets Zelenskyy and other European leaders.

12 February, 2025: Trump and Putin speak directly via telephone and agree to begin negotiations on ending Ukraine war.

18 February, 2025: Russian and US officials, meet in Saudi Arabia and agree to work toward ending the war.

28 February, 2025: Zelenskyy meets with Trump, Rubio and Vice President JD Vance in the White House .

11 March, 2025: US and Ukrainian officials meet in Saudi Arabia, with American officials putting forward a plan for a 30-day ceasefire. Kyiv agrees.

13 March, 2025: Putin effectively rejects the ceasefire plan, stating certain issues still must be resolved.

18 March, 2025: A proposal is put forward for a temporary halt on strikes on energy infrastructure. Both sides agree to the plan.

19 April, 2025: Putin announces a 30-hour ceasefire to mark the Easter holiday, although attacks continue across Ukraine.

28 April, 2025: Kremlin declares a unilateral 72-hour ceasefire starting 8 May. Kyiv does not agree.

11 May, 2025: Putin proposes restarting direct talks with Ukraine in Istanbul on 15 May, "without preconditions," but does not agree to the 30-day ceasefire.

12 May, 2025: Trump says he is "thinking about flying over" to Turkey for the talks after his visit to Qatar and the UAE.

13 May, 2025: Ukrainian presidential adviser Mykhailo Podolyak says Zelenskyy won't meet with any representative of Russia in Turkey except for Putin. *– PTI*

LETTERS write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

SALAR سالار

India's trade ties with Turkey, Azerbaijan strained

India's trade relations with Turkey and Azerbaijan are expected to come under strain due to Ankara and Baku backing Islamabad and condemning India's recent strikes on terror camps in Pakistan.

Following their support to Pakistan, calls for boycotting Turkish goods and tourism have surfaced across the country, with online travel platforms such as EaseMyTrip and Ixigo issuing advisories against visiting these nations.

In fact, Indian traders too have started boycotting Turkish products such as apples and marble.

India launched Operation Sindoor on 7 May to destroy nine terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir in retaliation for the Kashmir's Pahalgam terror attack on 22 April.

All subsequent retaliations for Pakistani offensives were carried out under "Operation Sindoor".

India and Pakistan on Saturday last announced reaching an understanding to stop all firings and military actions on land, air and sea, with effect from 5pm that day.

During the conflict, Pakistan used Turkish drones in its failed attempt to target Indian military installations.

Here are a few questions and answers (Q&A) explaining the impact of these developments on India's trade ties with Turkey and Azerbaijan.

Q: Why India's ties with Turkey and Azerbaijan may come under strain?

A: The two countries have criticised India's strike on terror infrastructures in Pakistan and Pakistan-occupied-Kashmir. Islamabad has also used Turkish drones in the conflict.

Q: What kind of trade does India have with Turkey and Azerbaijan?

A: India's exports to Turkey stood at USD 5.2 billion during April-February 2024-25 as against USD 6.65 billion in 2023-24. It accounts for only about 1.5 per cent of India's total exports of USD 437 billion.

India's exports to Azerbaijan stood at only USD 86.07 million during Apr-Feb 2024-25 as against USD 89.67 million in 2023-24. It accounts for a meagre 0.02 per cent of India's total outbound shipments.

India's imports from Turkey was USD 2.84 billion during Apr-Feb 2024-25 as against USD 3.78 billion in 2023-24. It accounts for only about 0.5 per cent of India's total imports of USD 720 billion.

Imports from Azerbaijan were USD 1.93 million during Apr-Feb 2024-25 as against USD 0.74 million in 2023-24. It accounts for a meagre 0.0002 per cent of India's total inbound shipments.

India has a trade surplus with both nations.

Q: What are the major products traded between these countries?

A: India's exports to Turkey include: mineral fuels and oil of USD 960 million in 2023-24, electrical machinery and equipment, auto and its parts, organic chemicals, pharma products, tanning and dyeing items, plastic, rubber, cotton, man-made fibres and filaments, iron and steel.

Imports: Different types of marbles as blocks and slabs, fresh apples about USD 10 million, gold, vegetables, lime and cement, mineral oil of USD 1.81 billion in 2023-24, chemicals, natural or cultured pearls, iron and steel.

A bilateral trade agreement was signed in 1973, followed by a pact on setting up an India, Turkiye Joint Commission on Economic and Technical Cooperation in 1983.

India's exports to Azerbaijan : tobacco and its products of USD 28.67 million in 2023-24, tea, coffee, cereals, chemicals, plastic, rubber, paper and paper board, and ceramic products.

Imports include: Animal fodder, organic chemicals, essential oils and perfumery, and raw hides and skins and leather of USD 1.52 million during April-February 2024-25. In 2023, India was the third-largest destination for Azerbaijan's crude oil.

Q: What kind of people-to-people ties exist between India and these two nations? A: There are currently around 3,000 estimated Indian nationals in Turkey, including 200 students. Similarly, the Indian community in Azerbaijan comprises more than 1,500 people.

Q: How many Indian tourists visit Turkey and Azerbaijan?

A: As per estimates, about 3 lakh Indian tourists visited Turkey in 2023 and over 2 lakh to Azerbaijan. *—PTI*

Calls for boycotting Turkish goods and tourism have surfaced across the country ***PHOTO:TRIPADVISOR***

New CJI Justice Gavai known for path-breaking verdicts

- Elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on 24 May, 2019, Justice Gavai was part of constitution benches that delivered path-breaking verdicts.

Justice Bhushan Ramkrishna Gavai, India's 52nd Chief Justice and its first Buddhist one, has played a key role in shaping the judicial landscape, penning about 300 verdicts, including landmark rulings on constitutional issues, liberty, and perhaps most importantly against the executive's "bulldozer justice".

Justice Gavai, the second Dalit after KG Balakrishnan to head the Indian judiciary, was sworn in by President Droupadi Murmu on Wednesday for a six-month tenure ending 23 November, 2025.

Rising from humble beginnings to the highest judicial office of the land, Justice Gavai belongs to a village in Maharashtra's Amravati district. He touched his mother's feet after taking oath of office at the Rashtrapati Bhavan. Born on 24 November, 1960 in Amaravati, he is the son of RS Gavai, a career politician who started the Republican Party of India (Gavai).

Elevated as a judge of the Supreme Court on 24 May, 2019, Justice Gavai was part of constitution benches that delivered path-breaking verdicts.

It was a bench headed by Justice Gavai that stayed the Allahabad High Court's observations on grabbing a woman's breasts and pulling the drawstrings of her "pyjama" not amounting to attempt to rape, and said it reflected total "insensitivity" and "inhuman approach".

During his tenure as an apex court judge in the last six years, Justice Gavai was part of around 700 benches dealing with matters pertaining to a range of subjects, including constitutional and administrative law, civil and criminal law, commercial disputes, arbitration law and environmental law.

He authored about 300 judgments, including constitution bench verdicts on various issues upholding the rule of law and safeguarding fundamental, human and legal rights of the citizens.

As the CJI, Justice Gavai will have to deal with issues such as the huge pendency of cases, including over 81,000 cases in the Supreme Court, to vacancies in courts.

On the judicial side, he will deal with the contentious issue related to the challenge to the validity of much debated Waqf (Amendment) Act, 2025.

He was part of a five-judge constitution bench which in December 2023 unanimously upheld the Centre's decision to abrogate provisions of Article 370 bestowing special status to the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir.

Another five-judge constitution bench, of which Justice Gavai was a part, annulled the electoral bonds scheme for political funding.

Justice Gavai is the second Dalit judge after KG Balakrishnan to head the Indian judiciary ***PHOTO: PTI***

He was also part of a five-judge constitution bench which, by a 4:1 majority verdict, gave the stamp of approval to the Centre's 2016 decision to demonetise Rs 1,000 and Rs 500 denomination currency notes.

Justice Gavai was part of a seven-judge constitution bench, which by a 6:1 majority held that states are constitutionally empowered to make sub-classifications within the Scheduled Castes.

A seven-judge constitution bench, including Justice Gavai, ruled that arbitration clause in an unstamped or insufficiently stamped agreement between parties was enforceable as such a defect was curable.

Justice Gavai was part of a five-judge constitution bench, which in January 2023 ruled that additional restrictions cannot be imposed on the fundamental right of freedom of speech and expression of high public functionaries as exhaustive grounds already exist under the Constitution to curb that right.

He penned a landmark verdict laying down pan-India guidelines on demolition and said no property should be demolished without a prior showcause notice.

He has also dealt with matters related to forests, wildlife and passed several orders to protect the environment.

His predecessor Sanjiv Khanna on 16 April recommended to the Centre Justice Gavai's name as the next CJI. *– PTI*

Indian-American student falls to death in Bahamas

NEW YORK, 14 MAY

Gaurav Jaisingh, an Indian-origin student from Bentley University in Waltham, Massachusetts, tragically died in the Bahamas after accidentally falling from a hotel balcony on 11 May, 2025. Jaisingh was on a senior class trip and was just days away from graduating. According to reports, he was in his hotel room with roommates when the incident occurred. Despite emergency services' efforts, he died en route to the hospital. Bentley University expressed condolences, stating the loss has deeply affected the community.

They plan to honour Jaisingh at the undergraduate commencement ceremony on 17 May. The police are investigating the incident. Jaisingh was a member of Delta Sigma Pi and the South Asian Students Association. *—PTI*

Families of S Korea plane crash victims sue 15 officials

SEOUL, 14 MAY

Families of victims of December's Jeju Air crash in South Korea have filed a complaint against 15 individuals, including the Transport Minister and the airline's President. The crash, which killed 179 of the 181 people onboard, occurred when the plaine skidded off the runway at Muan International Airport after its landing gear failed, hitting a concrete structure and bursting into flames. Bereaved relatives accuse officials of negligence in safety, maintenance and bird strike prevention. Lawyers say the complaint compels police to keep families updated. Though authorities found evidence of bird strikes and recording failures in the black boxes, no clear cause has been confirmed. This is South Korea's deadliest air disaster since 1997. *—PTI*

PHOTO: WIREIMAGE

Oscar-winning filmmaker Robert Benton dies at 92

NEW YORK, 14 MAY

Oscar-winning filmmaker Robert Benton has died aged 92 at his Manhattan home of natural causes, his son confirmed. The Texas-born director and writer reshaped Hollywood with 'Bonnie and Clyde' (1967), co-written with David Newman, and later won three Academy Awards for 'Kramer vs. Kramer' and 'Places in the Heart'. Despite childhood dyslexia, Benton adapted works by Philip Roth and EL Doctorow and directed acclaimed performances from Dustin Hoffman, Meryl Streep and Sally Field. A former Esquire art director, Benton brought emotional depth to stories of family, loss and resilience. His 1994 film 'Nobody's Fool', starring Paul Newman, earned critical praise. *—PTI*

Bolivia's President Luis Arce not to join 2025 race

BOLIVIA, 14 MAY

Facing a likely defeat in Bolivia's August presidential election, President Luis Arce announced late Tuesday he would not seek re-election. Arce, in office since 2020, cited fears of splitting the leftist vote, which could return right-wing forces to power. His decision comes amid an escalating power struggle within the ruling MAS party, particularly with former ally Evo Morales, who is attempting a comeback despite a court ruling barring his candidacy. Arce urged MAS to unite behind Senate President Andronico Rodríguez, a rising political figure. With Morales forming a new party and no clear opposition front-runner, the election promises to be highly contested. Bolivia faces economic woes, fuelling discontent among MAS's traditional working-class base. *—PTI*

Trump meets with Syria's interim President in Saudi

US President tells Gulf nations to monitor Iran's nukes

RIYADH, 14 MAY

US President Donald Trump met with Syria's interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa, the first such encounter between the two nations' leaders in 25 years.

The meeting, on the sidelines of Trump sitting with the leaders of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC), marks a major turn of events for a Syria still adjusting to life after the over 50-year, iron-gripped rule of the Assad family.

Al-Sharaa is the first Syrian leader to meet an American President since Hafez Assad met Bill Clinton in Geneva in 2000. It's also remarkable given al-Sharaa, under the nom de guerre Abu Mohammed al-Golani, has ties to al-Qaida and joined insurgents battling US forces in Iraq before entering the Syrian war. Trump on Tuesday said the US also would lift economic sanctions on Syria. "The sanctions were really crippling and very powerful," he said, adding that he wants to give Syria "a chance at peace" under al-Sharaa.

Syria's interim President Ahmad al-Sharaa greets US President Donald Trump in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

Trump also told Gulf leaders on Wednesday that he urgently wants "to make a deal" with Iran to wind down its nuclear programme but that Tehran must end its support to proxy groups as part of any potential agreement.

After his visit to Saudi, Trump flew to Qatar on Wednesday, where he was greeted by the country's ruling emir Sheikh Tamim Al Thani. Reports said the two countries have signed deals to boost defence and trade ties. *—PTI*

Saudi suppressing migrants' deaths: Rights activists

DUBAI, 14 MAY

Scores of labourers from countries including India, Bangladesh and Nepal have faced preventable deaths from electrocution, road accidents, falling from heights, and more while working in Saudi Arabia, according to a report by the advocacy groups.

Muhammad Arshad **PHOTO: H_R_ MATTER/X**

Rights groups Human Rights Watch (HRW) and FairSquare accuse Saudi of misreporting such deaths and failing to investigate, preventing families from receiving compensation that they are entitled to and even knowing how their loved ones died.

As Saudi Arabia pushes ahead with hundreds of billions of dollars in infrastructure and development initiatives – including the 2034 men's soccer World Cup and the futuristic city Neom – rights groups warn of thousands more avoidable deaths in the coming years.

In one case, the HRW said a Bangladeshi worker was electrocuted on the job. But his employer allegedly withheld the body, telling the family they would be compensated only if they agreed to a local burial. Another family reported waiting nearly 15 years for compensation.

Earlier, rights groups also said Qatar, which hosted the competition in 2022, had thousands of unexplained worker deaths. *—PTI*

Mexico confirms cartel family's deal with Trump

Mexico City, 14 May

Mexico's Security Secretary Omar García Harfuch confirmed that 17 family members of cartel leaders entered the US last week as part of a deal between the Sinaloa Cartel and the Trump administration. Harfuch confirmed a report by independent journalist Luis Chaparro that family members of Ovidio Guzman Lopez had entered the US. The confirmation comes the same day that the US Attorney General's Office announced charging a number of cartel leaders with "narcoterrorism" *—PTI*

FDA axes fluoride products which protect kids' teeth

Washington, 14 May

US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) announced an effort on Tuesday to phase out ingestible fluoride supplements used to strengthen children's teeth, opening a new front in Health Secretary Robert F Kennedy Jr's effort against a mainstay of dental care. The FDA said it will conduct a scientific review of children's products by late October to remove them from the market. *—PTI*

British man gets a decade in Saudi jail over tweet

Dubai, 14 May

A British Bank of America analyst was sentenced to a decade in a Saudi Arabian prison apparently over a social media post, according to his lawyer. Ahmed al-Doush's family believes the charges against him stemmed from a deleted 2018 tweet about Sudan that did not mention Saudi Arabia and his relationship with the son of a Saudi critic in exile, Amnesty International said. *—PTI*

PEACE TALK

A man stands near the rubble of a building, destroyed a day before by a Russian airstrike, at Kostiantynivka in Ukraine on 8 May **PHOTO: PTI**

Russia opposes France's nuclear bomber offer

MOSCOW/PARIS, 14 MAY

Kremlin says it opposes to France's offer of deploying nuclear bombers across Europe as a form of suppression.

On Tuesday, the French President Emmanuel Macron repeated the country's honesty in wanting to deploy its nuclear arsenal via warplanes across Europe as an alternative to that of US.

According to Russian state media TASS, Kremlin spokesperson Dmitry Peskov on Wednesday said, "The proliferation of nuclear weapons on the European continent is something that won't contribute to security, predictability and stability."

"Now the entire system of strategic stability and security is in a deplorable state for understandable reasons," he added.

The tension between Europe and Moscow reached an all-time high since the Cold War.

On Tuesday, Macron said that France which is the only nation capable of using nuclear within the EU, is open to initiating discussions on providing a Europe-wide nuclear umbrella soon.

"Russia has become a threat for France and Europe" Macron said.

Macron on Tuesday told TF1 television that "The Americans have the bombs on planes in Belgium, Germany, Italy, Turkey."

"We are ready to open this discussion. I will define the framework in a very specific way in the weeks and months to come." *—Agencies*

Russia sentences election watch group activist

Moscow, 14 May

A court in Moscow on Wednesday convicted one of the leaders of a prominent independent election monitoring group on charges of organising the work of an "undesirable" organisation and sentenced him to five years in prison. Grigory Melkonyants, co-chair of Russia's leading election watchdog Golos, said the charges were politically motivated. The case is part of the monthslong crackdown on Kremlin critics and rights activists that the government ratcheted up after invading Ukraine in 2022. Golos exposed violations in every major election in Russia since it was founded in 2000. *–PTI*

Grigory Melkonyants said the charges were politically motivated **PHOTO: X**

Polls our internal matter, Yunus aide tells India

DHAKA, 14 MAY

- Yunus' Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam was reacting to concerns raised by India on the ban on the activities of Awami League under an overnight revised anti-terrorism law

Elections are entirely Bangladesh's internal matter, Chief Adviser Muhammad Yunus' top aide has said, adding that the ban on former prime minister Sheikh Hasina's party was necessary to protect national security and sovereignty of the country.

Yunus' Press Secretary Shafiqul Alam was reacting to concerns raised by India on the ban imposed on the activities of Hasina's Awami League. Bangladesh on Monday officially disbanded Awami League under an overnight revised anti-terrorism law.

"Elections are entirely our internal matter. We urge all to respect the sovereign will of our people in matters relating to elections," Alam told Bangladesh Sangbad Sangstha (BSS), the state-run news agency, on Tuesday.

India's External Affairs Ministry spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal on Tuesday said the ban on Awami League "without due process is a concerning development."

Reacting to Jaiswal's comment, Alam said, "As for elections, we recall how the Awami League repeatedly resorted to grossly farcical elections and caused irreparable damages to our electoral processes and institutions."

"The wounds caused by the crimes against humanity perpetrated by this party are still fresh," Alam said, adding, "We have witnessed how Awami League destroyed our democratic fabric." *—PTI*

Israeli airstrikes in Gaza claim 70 lives

DEIR AL-BALAH, 14 MAY

At least 70 people and 22 children were killed in Gaza early Wednesday in a punishing series of Israeli airstrikes across Gaza, according to local hospitals and health officials.

The strikes come a day after Hamas released an Israeli-American hostage in a deal brokered by the United States.

The Israeli military refused to comment on the strikes but had warned residents of Jabaliya to evacuate late Tuesday night due to Hamas infrastructure in the area, including rocket launchers. In Jabaliya, rescue workers smashed through collapsed concrete slabs using hand tools in order to remove bodies of some of the children who were killed.

Palestinians inspect the rubble of homes destroyed by Israeli airstrikes at Jabalia in northern Gaza Strip on Wednesday **PHOTO: PTI**

On Tuesday, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu said there was "no way" Israel would halt its war in Gaza, dimming hopes for a ceasefire.

Netanyahu's office said Israeli forces were just days away from a promised escalation of force and would enter Gaza "with great strength to complete the mission... It means destroying Hamas."

Israel has blocked humanitarian aid into Gaza for the past 10 weeks. Half a million Palestinians are facing possible starvation, while one million others can barely get enough food, revealed findings by Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, a leading international authority on hunger crises. *—PTI*

Judge cuts Menendez brothers' sentences

LOS ANGELES, 14 MAY

Erik and Lyle Menendez will have a new shot at freedom after 35 years behind bars for murdering their parents, a judge ruled on Friday.

Los Angeles County Superior Court Judge Michael Jesic reduced the brothers' sentences from life without parole to 50 years to life. They're now eligible for parole under California's youthful offender law because they committed the crime under the age of 26.

Erik and Lyle Menendez

"I'm not saying they should be released, it's not for me to decide," Jesic said. "I do believe they've done enough in the past 35 years, that they should get that chance."

The brothers did not show any apparent emotion during most of the testimony as they appeared via live-stream video, but chuckled when one of their cousins, Diane Hernandez, told the court that Erik Menendez received A+ grades in all of his classes in college. *—PTI*

COURT RULES IN FAVOUR OF NYT IN EU TEXT CASE

BRUSSELS, 14 MAY

A top European court ruled on Wednesday that the European Commission was wrong to refuse the New York Times access to text messages sent between President Ursula von der Leyen and a pharmaceutical boss during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The US newspaper's lawyers "succeeded in rebutting the presumption of non-existence and of non-possession of the requested documents," according to a statement from the European Union's General Court in Luxembourg.

The case highlights ongoing questions about oversight of the commission, which insists that text messages and other "ephemeral" electronic communications do not necessarily constitute documents of interest that should be saved or made public.

The court said "the commission cannot merely state that it does not hold the requested documents but must provide credible explanations enabling the public and the court to understand why those documents cannot be found". It also said that the commission "has not sufficiently clarified whether the requested text messages were deleted and, if so, whether the deletion was done deliberately or automatically". *—PTI*

TRAPPED BY TECH

Thumbprint on cigarette box leads to arrest in 1977 murder

SAN JOSE, 14 MAY

Nearly half a century after a young California woman was strangled to death, officials said a thumbprint on a carton of cigarettes led to an arrest. Willie Eugene Sims was arrested in Jefferson, Ohio, in connection with the death of Jeanette Ralston, said the Santa Clara County District Attorney's (DA) Office.

Sims, 69, has been charged with murder and was arraigned on Friday in Ashtabula County Court before being sent to California. Ralston was found dead in the back seat of her Volkswagen Beetle on 1 February, 1977 in San Jose, said the DA Office. Her body was found in the carport area of an apartment complex near the bar where she was last seen.

The cigarette box was found in Ralston's car **PHOTO: DA OFFICE**

She had been strangled with a long-sleeve dress shirt, and evidence suggested she was sexually assaulted. Her car showed signs of having been unsuccessfully set on fire.

Her friends saw her leave the bar with an unknown man the evening before, saying she would be back in 10 minutes, but never returned. Police interviewed friends and witnesses, creating a suspect sketch. But the investigation went cold.

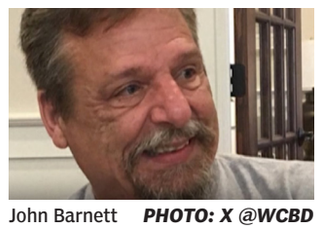
Recently however, a thumbprint found on Ralston's cigarette carton in her car was found to match Sims last fall after law enforcement requested to run the print through the FBI's updated system, prosecutors said. *—PTI*

Whistleblower's family settles lawsuit with Boeing

CHARLESTON, 14 MAY

The family of a former Boeing quality control manager, who killed himself after lawyers questioned him about his whistleblowing on alleged jumbo jet defects, has settled a lawsuit against the aircraft maker. Details of the settlement over John Barnett's death were not disclosed in a court filing Monday.

Barnett, a longtime Boeing employee, shared his safety concerns with journalists after he retired in 2017. He said he once saw discarded metal shavings near wiring for the flight controls that could have cut the wiring and caused a catastrophe. He also noted problems with up to a quarter of the oxygen systems on Boeing's 787 planes.



John Barnett **PHOTO: X @WCBD**

Barnett shared his concerns with his supervisors and others before leaving Boeing, but according to the lawsuit they responded by ignoring him and then harassing him.

Barnett, 62, shot himself on March 9, 2024, in Charleston after answering questions from attorneys for several days. He lived in Louisiana.

The only detail on the settlement was that either side can reopen the lawsuit if the settlement is not finalised in 60 days. *—PTI*

Gold price declines by ₹650 to ₹96,850/10g

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Gold prices declined Rs 650 to Rs 96,850 per 10g in the national capital on Wednesday amid a weak trend in global markets, according to the All India Sarafa Association. Gold of 99.9 per cent purity had closed at Rs 97,500 per 10g in the previous market session. Gold of 99.5 per cent purity depreciated Rs 700 to Rs 96,400 per 10g (inclusive of all taxes). It had settled at Rs 97,100 per 10g on Tuesday. Extending the losses for the third straight day, silver prices plunged Rs 1,450 to Rs 98,000 per kg (inclusive of all taxes) on Wednesday. Spot gold in the global markets dipped USD 20.65 to USD 3,229.64 per ounce. *—PTI*

PHOTO:FREEPIK

Rupee gains 10P to settle at 85.26 against USD

MUMBAI, 14 MAY

The rupee pared most of its initial gains and ended the day higher by 10 paise at 85.26 (provisional) against the American currency on Wednesday, supported by gains in domestic equities and positive macroeconomic data. Forex traders said the weakness of the American currency in the overseas market and rising appetite for riskier assets amid easing trade tariff tensions boosted investors' sentiments. At the interbank foreign exchange, the domestic unit opened on a positive note and moved between the intraday high of 85.05 and the low of 85.52 against the greenback. Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.64 per cent lower at 100.35. *—PTI*

Accretion pharma opens IPO; eyes ₹30 crore

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Accretion Pharmaceuticals Ltd opened its initial public offering (IPO) for subscription on Wednesday, aiming to raise nearly Rs 30 crore. The IPO, priced between Rs 96 and Rs 101 per share, will remain open until 16 May. As of 2pm on day one, the issue was subscribed 59 per cent according to NSE data. The company plans to issue 29.46 lakh fresh shares to raise Rs 29.75 crore, with proceeds allocated for machinery purchase, facility upgrades in Ahmedabad, debt repayment, and working capital. In the first nine months of FY2025, it reported revenue of Rs 35.66 crore and a profit of Rs 5.23 crore. Prior to launch, Rs 2.13 crore was raised from anchor investors, including Pink Oak Global Fund and Vikasa India EIF I Fund. *—PTI*

Vi to launch 5G in Delhi-NCR on Thursday

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Vodafone Idea (Vi) will roll out its 5G services in Delhi- National Capital Region (NCR) on 15 May, the company announced on Wednesday. In a statement, the telco said it is set to launch 5G services in all 17 priority regions where it has secured 5G spectrum, by August of this year. Its introductory 5G offer includes unlimited data for users with 5G-enabled devices on plans starting from Rs 299, it added. The expansion of services in Delhi-NCR follows the telco's 5G launch in Chandigarh and Patna in April, and in Mumbai in March. Earlier, Vi had said it will also launch 5G services in Bengaluru this month. Additionally, Vi has deployed AI-driven Self-Organising Network (SON) technology to enhance network performance further. *—PTI*

Markets end higher as inflation cools to 3.16%

Sensex jumps 182.34 pts, Nifty up 88.55 pts in volatile trade

MUMBAI, 14 MAY

Equity benchmark indices Sensex and Nifty ended higher on Wednesday as retail inflation eased to a nearly six-year low of 3.16 per cent in April, creating enough room for the RBI to go for another rate cut in the June monetary policy review.

A cooling US April inflation data and a pause in global trade tensions added to the positive trend in the equity markets, traders said.

In a highly volatile trade, the 30-share BSE benchmark gauge Sensex climbed 182.34 points or 0.22 per cent to settle at 81,330.56. The gauge hit a high of 81,691.87 and a low of 80,910.03.

The NSE Nifty rose 88.55 points or 0.36 per cent to 24,666.90.

From the Sensex firms, Tata Steel, Eternal, Tech Mahindra, Maruti, Mahindra & Mahindra, Infosys, IndusInd Bank, HCL Tech, Tata Consultancy Services and Bharti Airtel were the major gainers.

A cooling US April inflation data and a pause in global trade tensions added to the positive trend **PHOTO: PTI**

Telecom operator Bharti Airtel climbed nearly 1 per cent after it posted about a five-fold jump in consolidated net profit to Rs 11,022 crore in the March 2025 quarter, mainly due to the tariff hike impact and one-time gain on tax benefits.

However, Asian Paints, Tata Motors, Kotak Mahindra Bank, NTPC and Power Grid were among the laggards.

Tata Motors dipped over 1 per cent after the firm reported a 51 per cent decline in consolidated net profit to Rs 8,556 crore for the March quarter, hit by lower volumes and operating leverage.

Meanwhile, the retail inflation eased to a nearly six-year low of 3.16 per cent in April, mainly due to subdued prices of vegetables, fruits, pulses, and other protein-rich items, creating enough room for the Reserve Bank to go for another round of rate cuts in the June monetary policy review.

Global oil benchmark Brent crude declined 1.13 per cent to USD 65.88 a barrel. *—PTI*

Food, fuel prices push WPI inflation down to 0.85%

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Wholesale Price Inflation (WPI) dropped to a 13-month low of 0.85 per cent in April with softening in prices of food articles, fuel and manufactured products, and experts projected further easing in the data of next month, government data showed on Wednesday.

WPI-based inflation was 2.05 per cent in March. It was 1.19 per cent in April last year. WPI inflation lower than 0.85 per cent was last recorded in March, 2024, when it was 0.26 per cent.

"Positive rate of inflation in April, 2025 is primarily due to an increase in prices of manufacture of food products, other manufacturing, chemicals and chemical products, manufacture of other transport equipment and manufacture of machinery and equipment, etc," the industry ministry said in a statement.

FOOD ARTICLES SAW A DEFLATION OF 0.86% IN APRIL, AGAINST AN INFLATION OF 1.57% IN MARCH

As per the WPI data, deflation in food, and fuel and power WPI, along with disinflation in manufactured products drove the moderation.

Food articles saw a deflation of 0.86 per cent in April, against an inflation of 1.57 per cent in March. Deflation in vegetables was 18.26 per cent during April compared to deflation of 15.88 per cent in March. In onion, inflation eased to 0.20 per cent in April, as against 26.65 per cent in March. Inflation in fruits softened to 8.38 per cent, from 20.78 per cent in the previous month. *—PTI*

India's vegetable oil imports dip 32% in April

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

India's vegetable oil imports fell 32 per cent to 8.91 lakh tonnes in April from a year earlier, industry body Solvent Extractors Association (SEA) said on Wednesday, as shipments of both palm and refined oils declined.

Vegetable oil imports, comprising edible and non-edible oils, stood at 13.18 lakh tonnes in the year-ago period.

"The import in the last three months was at a very low level due to reduced demand for palm oil coupled with increased crushing of mustard in the country," the SEA said, adding that import of refined edible oils from Nepal, estimated at 70,000 tonnes monthly, also affected overall imports, it added.

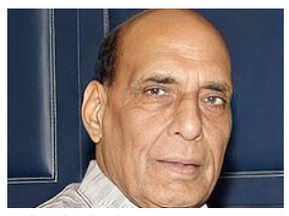
For the first six months of the 2024-25 oil year (November-October), total vegetable oil imports decreased to 65.02 lakh tonnes, from 70.69 lakh tonnes a year earlier.

Palm oil imports also plunged 53 per cent to 3.21 lakh tonnes in April. *—PTI*

GROWING STRONGER

Defence exports up 34-fold in a decade, says Rajnath Singh

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY



Rajnath Singh **PHOTO: WIKIPEDIA**

Defence exports from India are at all-time highs, having risen a whopping 34-fold over the past decade.

"India exported defence goods worth Rs 23,622 crore in 2024-25 – a 34-fold rise as against just Rs 686 crore in 2013-14," Defence Minister Rajnath Singh's office posted on X.

The defence minister's office asserted that India's defence sector is growing stronger than ever, driven by the spirit of a self-reliant or Atmanirbhar Bharat.

As part of its "Atmanirbhar" and Make in India plans, the government launched various schemes, including the production-linked incentive (PLI), in various sectors to make Indian manufacturers globally competitive, attract investments, enhance exports, integrate India into the global supply chain, and reduce dependency on imports.

With the government's thrust on the Make in India initiative, defence production has surged to historic highs. This rise in defence manufacturing has also led to substantial returns for investors in major defence manufacturing PSUs over the past years.

The government is investing heavily in defence and aerospace manufacturing. Notably, many global companies have either shared or shown intent to share critical defence and aerospace knowledge with India.

A wide range of items, including ammunition, arms, subsystems/systems and parts and components, were exported to around 80 countries in the just-concluded financial year, defence ministry data revealed. The government is now aiming for annual exports worth Rs 50,000 crore by 2029. *— ANI*

DEFENCE STOCKS ROAR

PARAS DEFENCE & SPACE TECHNOLOGIES +3.76%

HINDUSTA N AERONAUTICS LIMITED 3.68%

BHARAT ELECTRONICS LIMITED +2.61%

ADANI DEFENCE 0.85%

BHARAT DYNAMICS LIMITED +0.59%

Sebi cautions investors as Strata SM REIT exits

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Markets regulator Sebi on Wednesday cautioned investors against dealing with Strata Small and Medium Real Estate Investment Trust (SM REIT) as it is no longer a regulated intermediary or an SM REIT.

The decision came after the markets regulator reviewed "certain legal proceedings against the promoter of Strata SM REIT. The regulator said it had engaged with Strata SM REIT, its independent director, compliance and other officers and the trustee.

"Based on the engagement and discussions, Strata SM REIT has surrendered its certificate of registration as an SM REIT and will not hold out or represent itself as a Sebi -regulated intermediary or SM REIT," the regulator said in a statement.

Accordingly, the regulator advised investors to exercise caution while dealing with the entity. Sebi said Strata SM REIT has, as on date, not launched any SM REIT schemes nor migrated any pre-existing fractional real estate entities as an SM REIT scheme. Strata had registered as an SM REIT, a new asset class introduced by the Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) as a subclass within the REIT framework for assets valued between Rs 50-500 crore.

Similar to REITs, SM REIT units are required to be listed on stock exchanges but with a minimum lot size of 1 unit of Rs 10 lakh. *—PTI*

GROWW PAYS ₹47.85L TO SEBI AS SETTLEMENT FOR REGULATORY LAPSES CASE

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Groww Invest Tech on Wednesday settled a case pertaining to the alleged violation of stock brokers' rules and other norms after the online investing platform paid Rs 47.85 lakh towards settlement amount.

The order came after the broking company filed an application with Sebi "without admitting or denying the facts and conclusion of law", through a settlement order.

The case stemmed from a comprehensive inspection of Groww Invest Tech (formerly Nextbillion Technology Pvt Ltd).

The Securities and Exchange Board of India (Sebi) alleged that Groww had violated multiple provisions of the securities contracts (regulation), several Sebi circulars and stock broker regulations.

The markets watchdog also flagged Groww for offering non-securities services such as UPI payments and bill payments through its trading app, which could expose users to financial liability, the order said.

After remitting the settlement fee of Rs 47.85 lakh, Groww settled the case with Sebi.

However, Sebi has reserved the right to reopen the case if it finds that the company did not make full disclosures or breached the settlement terms.

On Tuesday, Groww Invest Tech settled with markets watchdog Sebi a matter related to alleged failure to handle a technical glitch in January 2024 by paying Rs 34.12 lakh. *—PTI*

Bookings for Azerbaijan, Turkey down by 60%

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

With boycott calls for travel to Turkey and Azerbaijan trending on social media, MakeMyTrip on Wednesday said it has witnessed a decline in bookings to the two nations by 60 per cent in the last one week while cancellations have jumped 250 per cent.

Calls for boycotting travel to Turkey and Azerbaijan have surfaced across the country in the aftermath of Operation Sindoor for their "support" to Pakistan.

"Indian travellers have expressed strong sentiments over the past one week, with bookings for Azerbaijan and Turkey decreasing by 60 per cent, while cancellations have surged by 250 per cent during the same period.

"In solidarity with our nation and out of deep respect for our armed forces, we strongly support this sentiment and advise all against all non-essential travel to Azerbaijan and Turkey," a MakeMyTrip spokesperson said. *—PTI*

ADVENTURE SPIRIT

Airbnb eyes millennials, Gen Z for growth

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Online accommodation hosting platform Airbnb is tapping into the huge population of millennials and Gen Z in India to drive its growth, according to its Co-Founder and Chief Strategy Officer Nathan Blecharczyk.

The company, which has introduced Airbnb Services and Airbnb Experiences along with an all-new app, is bullish that its experiences feature, which allows travellers to explore a city with local guides, will offer good growth opportunities in the Indian market, Blecharczyk said.

"India is an incredibly important market for Airbnb... to state the obvious, the largest (population-wise) country in the world, and largest population of young people, specifically millennials and Gen Z, that's the target audience for Airbnb," he said when asked how it is looking at the Indian market.

The company says its feature allowing travellers to explore a city with local guides will help grab the Indian market **PHOTO: PTI**

These young people, who want to experience the world, have a spirit of adventure and love the opportunity to stay in a home and have a unique experience, and to be able to bring friends with them, Blecharczyk added.

Under Airbnb Services, the company launched 10 categories of services which travellers can book, such as fully customisable in-home meals from professional chefs, personalised photo sessions from experienced photographers; massage by certified therapists and training such as Yoga, strength training and more with personal trainers, including renowned fitness professionals and world champion athletes.

Asked about the impact of India-Pakistan military conflict, he did not offer a specific comment while wishing a "swift and peaceful resolution", but said "around the world, disruptions happen, and what we see is that there's still a strong interest to travel". *—PTI*

Apple to make iPhones controlled by thoughts

WASHINGTON, 14 MAY

Apple is moving toward a future where people could control their iPhones with their thoughts, using brain implants, according to American daily. This idea is similar to what Elon Musk's Neuralink is aiming for.

The tech company is said to be working with Synchron, a brain-tech firm that has created a device called the Stentrode, as per The Wall Street Journal.

This device is placed in a blood vessel near the brain's motor cortex and reads brain signals to operate digital devices.

This kind of technology could greatly help people with serious spinal injuries, ALS, or those recovering from strokes.

A Brain-Computer Interface (BCI) picks up signals from the brain using sensors and turns them into actions—such as moving a cursor, typing, or opening apps—without touching the screen. *—Agencies*

WTC Final-bound SA players likely to miss IPL playoffs

JOHANNESBURG, 14 MAY

South African players who have been picked for the World Test Championship Final against Australia are likely to miss the IPL playoffs as the country's cricket board is standing firm on prioritising national duty over league commitments. The BCCI confirmed on Monday that the IPL will resume on 17 May with the final slated for 3 June. However, the revised schedule has left players from WTC finalists Australia and South Africa in a tight spot. The franchises and the BCCI have urged foreign boards to make their players available for the remainder of the tournament. CSA, however, has reiterated its commitment to WTC Final preparations.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Awoniyi is in an induced coma after surgery

LONDON, 14 MAY

Nottingham Forest striker Taiwo Awoniyi has reportedly been placed in an induced coma after undergoing "urgent" surgery on an abdominal injury that was the subject of a heavily debated on-field discussion between the club's manager and owner following a Premier League game over the weekend. The Nigerian was injured when he collided with the goal frame after coming on as a second-half substitute during the 2-2 draw against Leicester on Sunday. Awoniyi was placed in an induced coma to aid his recovery from Monday's operation—*PTI*

Pakistan doubtful for Asia Cup hockey in Rajgir

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

The national federation is awaiting a government advisory, but Pakistan's participation in this year's Hero Asia Cup hockey tournament in India is in serious doubt because of the prevalent tension between the two countries after the Pahalgam terror attack. The Asia Cup will be staged in Rajgir, Bihar, from 27 August to 7 September. Hosts India, Pakistan, Japan, Korea, China, Malaysia, Oman and Chinese Taipei are scheduled to participate in the 12th edition of the continental showpiece, a qualifying tournament for next year's World Cup to be held in the Netherlands and Belgium. "It is too early to say anything, but we will follow the government's directive on this issue, which has been the case in the past," HI secretary general Bholanath Singh told PTI.—*PTI*

PHOTO: X

Fuller lengths behind Rana's remarkable run in SL

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Sneh Rana's triumphant return to the Indian women's cricket team was aided by bowling coach Avishkar Salvi, the off-spinner herself said on Wednesday. Salvi's insights on reading the pitch and pulling back pace worked in Rana's favour. "The ball was coming onto the bat nicely, so we were advised to cut off the pace and bowl fuller," she explained. On batter-dominant pitches, Rana's clever use of varied pace proved to be the game-changer, helping her claim 15 wickets and finish as the leading wicket-taker of the multi-nation ODI series, equalling Australia's Cathryn Fitzpatrick's long-standing record. "I had a word with our bowling coach, Avishkar sir... He told us what kind of deliveries would work there," Rana told PTI Videos.—*PTI*

Alcaraz storms past Jack Draper to reach semis

Gauff advances to semi-finals by ousting Mirra Andreeva

NEW DELHI, 31 OCT

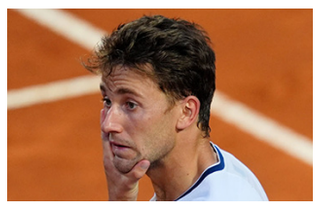
Carlos Alcaraz strode into the semi-finals of the Italian Open on Wednesday after putting in a powerful display to down Jack Draper in straight sets, 6-4, 6-4.

Third seed Alcaraz will face one of reigning Rome champion Alexander Zverev and home hope Lorenzo Musetti, the day's final pairing on centre court, in the last four at the Foro Italico.

His impressive win over Draper kept alive his chances of a third title of the season and also moved him up to number two in the world rankings behind Jannik Sinner.

Alcaraz had to be at his best to down fifth seed Draper, who put in another strong showing on clay in Italy after losing the Madrid Open final to Casper Ruud. Draper was trying to become the first British man to reach the last four in the Italian capital since 2016, when Andy Murray was beaten by Novak Djokovic in the final.But he lost control of the first set when, after taking a two-game lead, he was broken twice by Alcara, who then took the lead in the match. American tennis star **Coco Gauff** is through to the semi-finals at the 2025 Italian Open in Rome. The world No. 3 beat Mirra Andreeva in straight sets, 6-4, 7-6(7-5) on Wednesday (14 May) to set up a mouth-watering women's singles semi-final with the winner of the match between top seed Aryna Sabalenka and Olympic champion Zheng Qinwen (People's Republic of China).

Carlos Alcaraz strode into the semi-finals of the Italian Open ***PHOTO: X / @CARLITOSALCARAZZ***



Coco Gauff and Casper Ruud ***PHOTO: X***

Two days after dominating British star Emma Raducanu 6-1, 6-2 in the quarters, the 21-year-old Gauff continued her impressive run on clay, having now won nine of her last ten matches on the surface.

It was the fourth encounter between Gauff and Andreeva on the WTA tour, with the Floridian taking all of them.

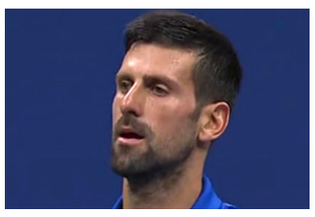
Gauff has been spending a lot of time on improving her footwork ahead of the second Grand Slam tournament of this season, the 2025 French Open at Roland-Garros - and it paid off once again.

Ruud in to quarterfinals after defeating Munar

Casper Ruud is ready to take advantage of the good feelings and confidence gained in Madrid to also triumph at the Foro Itálico. The Norwegian is already in the quarterfinals of the ATP Masters 1000 Rome 2025 after defeating Jaume Munar 6-3, 6-4, demonstrating that he is in great form. He will now face Jannik Sinner.

Novak Djokovic spotted with new coach

We are heading into the business end of the Italian Open, with only the very best players still battling it out for victory in Rome. Several of the draw's biggest names have already fallen, including the likes of Novak Djokovic and Emma Raducanu. Jack Draper is among those left standing after his win over Corentin Moutet yesterday and faces a major challenge in the quarter-finals. He will go up against Carlos Alcaraz, who has already insisted that he wants 'revenge' over Draper after losing to him at Indian Wells. —*PTI*



PEACE WITH SINNER

Tennis fan Pope Leo XIV meets with World No. 1 Italy's tennis player Jannik Sinner in The Vatican and gets a racket on Italian Open off-day ***PHOTO: X/@VATICANNEWS***

Tour de France final on 27 July

PARIS, 14 MAY

The final stage of this year's Tour de France will go up the Butte Montmartre, a year after the road race of the Paris Olympics went on the iconic hill, organisers said on Wednesday.

The Tour starts on 5 July in Lille and ends on 27 July."An exceptional route has been designed, inspired by the course of the road race at the 2024 Olympic Games, which drew over 500,000 spectators last August," Amaury Sport Organisation said in a statement. "The riders will climb Montmartre hill and pass at the foot of the Sacre-Coeur before contesting a stage whose scenario could break with the traditions established over the past 50 years in the heart of the capital." —*PTI*

AFTER VIRAT & ROHIT

India has a huge amount of talent: James Anderson

LONDON, 14 MAY

England pace great James Anderson feels India's next generation of batters have the aggression and fearlessness to step into the "big shoes" of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma in the Test team.

Kohli and Rohit, legends of Indian batting, bid farewell to Test cricket within a week of each other. Having already stepped away from T20IS last year, the duo will now only feature in ODIS for India. Kohli ended his inspiring run in the traditional format, scoring 9230 runs from 123 matches with 30 hundreds at an average of 46.85, while Rohit accumulated 4301 runs from 67 Tests at an average of 40.57 and has 12 centuries and 18 fifties to his name. "Great players.

Kohli, one of the greatest Test batters that's ever been," Anderson said on 'Talksport'. The twin retirements mean India will not only have a new captain at the helm but will be without two of their most experienced players.

"There will be a new captain because Sharma has retired. There's big shoes to fill there, but they've got a huge amount of talent in their squad," Anderson added. Anderson praised the new crop of Indian batters for their attacking mindset. "You just have to watch the IPL. They are bringing players into Test cricket from the IPL now who are just so attacking, aggressive, and fearless," he said. —*PTI*

DC signs Mustafizur as Jake's replacement

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Delhi Capitals on Wednesday signed Bangladesh left-arm seamer Mustafizur Rahman as a replacement for Australian batter Jake-Fraser McGurk, who will not rejoin the team for the remainder of the Indian Premier League after returning home due to the ongoing India-Pakistan hostilities. raser-McGurk's release won't hurt DC, as he was dropped after the first six games in which he tallied only 55 runs. Also, if Mitchell Starc doesn't come, as is widely anticipated, then Mustafizur's left-arm seam bowling, with expertise in death overs, would come in handy.

"The JSW and GMR co-owned franchise Delhi Capitals today announced the signing of Bangladesh pacer Mustafizur Rahman as a replacement for Australian opener Jake Fraser-McGurk, who will be unavailable for the remainder of the TATA IPL 2025 season," the franchise stated in a release.

> **Complete madness, we were crammed into vans when the IPL match between Punjab Kings and Delhi Capitals was called off midway in Dharamsala**
>
> -Alyssa Healy, Australia women's team captain

Mustafizur, who made his IPL debut in 2016, previously represented the Delhi Capitals during the 2022 and 2023 seasons. In 2022, he picked up eight wickets in eight matches with an economy of 7.62, and in the following season, he played two matches for Delhi Capitals.

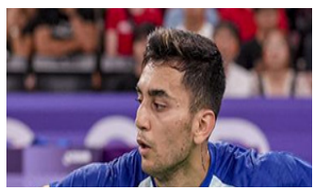
With 132 wickets in 106 T20Is for Bangladesh, Mustafizur has established himself as one of the leading left-arm pacers in white-ball cricket. —*PTI*

Lakshya crashes out; Aakarshi, Unnati advance

BANGKOK, 14 MAY

Indian shuttler Lakshya Sen crashed out in the opening round of the Thailand Open, while Aakarshi Kashyap and Unnati Hooda advanced after hard-fought victories in the Super 500 tournament here on Wednesday.

Sen fell to Ireland's Nhat Nguyen in a tense three-game battle, losing 18-21, 21-9 17-21 in a men's singles match that lasted one hour and 20 minutes. Priyanshu Rajawat too made a first-round exit as he went down 13-21, 21-1,7 16-21 against Alwi Farhan of Indonesia. In women's singles, Aakarshi survived a thrilling contest against Japan's Kaoru Sugiyama, winning 21-16, 20-2,2, 22-20. It was a match of narrow margins, with the Indian holding her nerve in the final stages of the decider. Unnati also fought her way through to the next round, registering a gritty 21-14, 18-2,1, 23-21 victory over Thailand's Thamonwan Nithiittikrai.



However, it was the end of the road for Rakshitha Sree Santhosh Ramraj, who lost her women's singles opener 18-21, 7-21 to eighth seed Yeo Jia Min of Singapore. —*PTI*

Neeraj Chopra to compete in Poland

NEW DELHI, 14 MAY

Star Indian javelin thrower Neeraj Chopra will compete in the 71st ORLEN Janusz Kusocioski Memorial event in Chorzów, Poland, on 23 May, following the postponement of next week's NC Classic in Bengaluru.

Chopra was slated to compete in the NC Classic, an event he was also set to host on 24 May alongside several global and Indian stars, but the event was postponed in the wake of the military confrontation between India and Pakistan.

In Chorzow, Chopra will be up against two-time world champion and Paris Olympics bronze medallist Anderson Peters of Grenada, Germany's Julian Weber and Polish national record holder Marcin Krukowski. Other Polish competitors include Cyprian Mrzyglod and Dawid Wegner.

The event in Poland will be the third competition for Chopra in the season. He started in South Africa. His next event is on 16 May at the Doha Diamond League, where he won the title in 2023 (88.67m) and finished second in 2024 (88.36m).

Peters will be Chopra's rival in Doha also. He was also to compete in the NC Classic, along with the likes of 2016 Olympics gold winner Thomas Rohler of Germany and 2015 world champion Julius Yego of Kenya. ORLEN Janusz Kusocinski Memorial is a World Athletics Continental Tour silver event. It is the oldest continuously held track and field meeting in Poland and one of the oldest in Europe. —*PTI*

Zara moves to tied10th spot at Queen Sirikit Cup

MIYAZAKI, 14 MAY

Zara Anand continued to be the best Indian on show after two rounds of the 45th Queen Sirikit Cup, shooting 1-under 71 on Wednesday to be tied-10th in the individual event here on Wednesday.

Mannat Brar, who shot 2-under 70, had the best second round among the three Indians competing in the tournament.

Zara (73-71) moved from T-12 to T-10 with a two-day aggregate of even-par 144, while Mannat (77-70) rose from T-25 to T-15.

The third Indian, Heena Kang (76-76), is placed tied 28th. —*PTI*

UFC 317

Topuria to face Oliveira for lightweight belt

NEW YORK, 14 MAY

UFC CEO Dana White announced the main and co-main events for UFC 317 that headline the promotion's annual International Fight Week on 28 June on Wednesday.

In the main event, former lightweight champion Charles Oliveira will take on former featherweight titleholder Ilia Topuria for the vacant lightweight title.

Oliveira is coming off a Fight of the Night-earning performance against Michael Chandler at UFC 309 last November. Former featherweight champion Topuria is fresh off back-to-back knockouts and title defences, and UFC 317 would mark the Spaniard's return to lightweight for the first time since his 2022 KO victory over Jai Herbert.

Ilia Topuria and Charles Oliveira will fight for UFC lightweight title ***PHOTO: X / @ILIATOPURIA***

Lightweight champion Islam Makhachev will be vacating his title to move up to the UFC welterweight division to face newly crowned champion Jack Della Maddalena at a later time and date.

The co-main event will see flyweight champion Alexandre Pantoja collide with the hard-hitting Kai Kara-France. Pantoja enters the fight on a 7-fight tear, with his last three outings being successful title defences. Kara-France is coming off a quick TKO over Erceg and will be aiming to make the most of his second crack at UFC gold.

White also revealed middleweight champion Dricus Du Plessis' next bout. The South African will defend his title against Khamzat Chimaev in the headliner at UFC 319 in Chicago on 18 August. —*PTI*

NBA PLAYOFFS: PACERS UPSET CAVS, NUGGETS FACE ELIMINATION

LONDON, 14 MAY

Indiana Pacers came from behind to send the Cleveland Cavaliers crashing out of the NBA playoffs on Tuesday while Oklahoma City Thunder overcame a dazzling Nikola Jokic display to push the Denver Nuggets to the brink of elimination.

The Cavaliers the top seeds in the Eastern Conference saw their postseason come to an abrupt halt after Tyrese Haliburton scored 31 points to power the Pacers to a 114-105 victory, sealing a 4-1 series triumph.

Western Conference top seeds Thunder grabbed a 112-105 victory over Nuggets to edge into a 3-2 lead in their titanic duel with the 2023 champions.

Three-time NBA Most Valuable Player Jokic delivered a towering performance for the Nuggets, the Serbian star finishing with 44 points, 15 rebounds and five assists.

But Jokic's heroics were in vain as the Thunder who had trailed for most of the game unleashed a fourth-quarter bombardment to outscore Denver 34-19 and seal a pulsating win. —*PTI*